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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the first six issues of a newsletter that addresses the concerns and needs of foreign-born parents living in the United States. Spanish-language editions of numbers 4-6 are included. Topics addressed include school and community; bilingual education and home environment; demographics; global learning; leadership; and the impact of multiculturalism and intercultural relationships on children, family, and community. Book reviews of multicultural books are also included, and issues concerning foreign language learning are addressed. Each issue also includes language tips for parents as well as for young readers. (NAV)

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The Foreign-Born Parent Network

Issues 1-6. 1995-96.

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The

FOREIGN-BORN
Parent
NETWORK ™

A Multicultural Publication of BOND
Alice Thoannes Rasmussen
Founder and publisher

September 1995
Issue No. 1

PARENTING IN A MULTICULTURAL WORLD!

Inside.....

- Why that is a HOT topic!
- Check out selected 1990 census data for Arlington County
- Enjoy our practical tip!
- Identify concerns **YOU** may have as a foreign-born parent or spouse
- Meet the network's founder
- Try our quiz!
- Check out some multicultural titles for youth

'Parenting in a multicultural world' is our rallying call!

For two good reasons!

One, foreign-born parents are naturally equipped with the knowledge of a foreign culture and language. And that's a terrible resource to waste in today's transnational economy!

Second, the new global order has raised **the standards of competitiveness and the stakes** for all concerned, i.e.

- **OUR CHILDREN** who will enter the global workforce.
- **SCHOOLS** which groom the talent of tomorrow and **LOCAL COMMUNITIES including governments** which provide funding.
- and finally, **BUSINESSES** which draw on that talent pool, and more than ever realize that a happy parent makes a productive employee!

In this issue, FBPN identifies the stakes for all parents in general, and foreign-born parents in particular. Whether we recognize it not, the numbers are screaming for attention!

For schools and local communities

The bilingual method of teaching immigrants has gained increasing popularity in recent years. However, demand far exceeds supply for at least two reasons:

- There are not enough qualified bilingual staff in the various languages;
- School budgets shrink rather than increase. In fact, the cost of schooling U.S. immigrants is already sky high. In 1992 alone, $13.2 billion were spent at all levels of government. If we assume a projection of 11.1 million new immigrants over the next decade, there will be a budget problem of some major proportion!(*Time*, Fall 1993)

As you pause over these figures, consider this question: How do we explain the shortage of bilingual staff when census data point to an ex-

ploding foreign-born population?(see p. 4 and 5)

At the same time, there has been an equally strong demand for **foreign language immersion** programs, a demand which is still unmet. Not surprisingly, it is widely recognized that an American student who graduates from high school is **less equipped with language and cultural skills** than his European counterpart.

Like schools, local communities too are continually seeking ways to **balance** the integration of immigrants into the mainstream culture and the diversity of sometimes competing ethnic cultures. **The key word is BALANCE so that, in the process we may gain trust among one another.**

As political philosopher, Francis Fukuyama suggests, economic prosperity is founded on mutual trust, the sense of obligation that society's members feel toward one another. Intense preoccupations with such issues as diversity undermine trust and upset the common culture that brings people together. (*U.S. News & World Report*, August 1995) How then do we balance cultural assimilation and diversity while nurturing trust? **FBPN's view is that that balance can be achieved THROUGH CHILD-REARING.**

In global parenting, the role of parents in general and foreign-born parents in particular goes beyond passing on the native language to nurturing the child's INNATE ability to trust and thereby resist cultural biais. Bicultural couples have a unique facility because their children are the product of two distinct cultures. If bridging cultures is a parent's concern, what is the part of businesses?

Our view is that **businesses need to address long-term strategies that integrate work/family and diversity issues in the new context of global competitiveness.**

For businesses

For businesses, the global perspective carries many dimensions:

- Parenting education has become an employer's concern because family preoccupations affect workers' productivity and the success of career assignments. Recently, Motorola identified parenting classses as part of the **mandatory** 40 hours per year of job-related employee training. 44% of the company's workforce have children under 18!(*Business Week*, August 21, 1995)
- Since 1990, U.S. companies employ more than 60 million overseas workers; (*Personnel Journal*, July 1994)
- Language and cultural skills **as much as** job skills are success factors in international assignments. (*Personnel Journal*, April 1994)

Yet, consider this:

- It is estimated that 20% to 25% of overseas assignments fail for reasons that have **nothing to do with job skills.**
- A four-year expatriate assignment can cost a total of over $1.2 million in pre- and post-assignment as well as in-country expenses.
- While the more than 20,000 Japanese who work in the U.S. are fluent in English, only 200 Americans working in Japan can say their Japanese is fluent. (*Personnel Journal*, April 1994 & October 1994)

As businesses expand internationally, the imperative will be to:

- cut cost

• invest in development skills that have long-term applicability, and
• retain employee talent which they invested in.

To develop the organization's multicultural talent pool, we propose that
• **global parenting makes good business sense**. It boosts ethnic pride, family and community ties and in the process, employee loyalty and civic responsibility. At the same time, we suggest that
•**diversity be redefined in a global context**. That is, not simply in cross-cultural terms but also in the kind of **long-term strategies that ensure a continuous supply of innovative talent regardless of ethnic origin.**

What does FBPN seek to achieve and **how** does that benefit YOU?

For ALL families

Although the primary target is foreign-born parents, all parents concerned with issues presented by multiculturalism are welcome to join. The network is an interactive forum that seeks to create a dialogue across ethnic lines by focusing on the object of our highest calling, i.e. our children. We invite you to use the newsletter as **YOUR** mouthpiece.

For schools

We empower foreign-born parents of various economic backgrounds and sensitize them to the issue of active parental involvement.

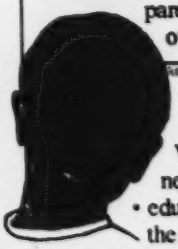
Foreign-born parents are both teachers and learners. As teachers, they are experts in their native culture. As learners, they have much to gain from their children's experience with assimilation in school. Lack of English fluency need not be an impediment.

FBPN equips parents with skills and strategies for taking on an active role using the most accessible language as a medium. Our next milestone is to translate the newsletter into several languages!

For local communities

One task of the highest order may be to identify and prepare leaders for a multicultural world. The thriving and diverse community of tomorrow needs civic-minded leaders that either represent or have the ability to connect with their constituents AND across ethnic boundaries.

Leaders are not born; they are made. FBPN works with families to build a value foundation for a multicultural future. We supply a relevant, multicultural platform that bonds foreign-born parents around our greatest asset, i.e. our children.



For businesses

We work with international businesses to
• educate employers and employees on the benefits of global parenting
• identify human resources strategies that focus on foreign-born employees as community assets to secure a continuous pool of global talent while promoting employee loyalty.

Other than your company's image, FBPN also boosts your marketing power. We supply census and practical data to support ethnic marketing.

The multicultural face of Arlington

Educate families about how to parent successfully in a multicultural world is what this newsletter is about. But schools, local communities and businesses too need to tap into foreign-born resources in ways that take into account the **EXPLODING** demographics! FBPN works with you to make 1 and 1 add to 4!

County population by race

	White	Black	American Ind., Eskimo, Aleut	Asian or Pacific Islander	Other Race	Total
Breakdown by race	130,745	17,947	485	11,556	10,183	170,936
Percent of population	76.5%	10.5%	0.3%	6.7%	6%	100%

Hispanic population by race

	White	Black	American Ind., Eskimo, Aleut	Asian, Pacific Islander	Other race	Total Hispanic
Breakdown by race	12,186	349	42	263	9,902	22,742
% of county population						13.3%

SOURCE: 1990 census, user-defined area, by race, Hispanic origin and ancestry, Table 3

The 'other race' category is of particular interest. Respondent entries reported in this group indicate a "multiracial, multiethnic, mixed, interracial or Spanish/ Hispanic origin". For example, children born of interethnic unions would typically fall in this category.

It has been observed that the diversity of any one culture becomes a diversity of many across generations and through interethnic marriages. (*Time*, Fall 1993) That being the case, the 'other race' data would require closer attention as a measure of bi/multicultural resources for the various ethnic communities.

Population by place of birth

	1980	1990	% change
Native Population	130,262	134,420	3.2%
Born in Virginia	29,724	26,803	-9.8%
Foreign-born	22,337	36,516	63.5%

Population by language spoken at home other than English

	1980	1990	% change
Total population age 5 & over	145,871	161,886	11%
Speaks language other than English	23,703	40,780	72%
Do not speak English well	4,209	20,612	387.3%

SOURCE: Selected social and demographics statistics, 1980,1990

In the Hispanic population breadkown by race, what stands out is the size of the 'other race' group relative to other racial characteristics. The racial diversity among Hispanics is equally striking.

Between 1980 and 1990, there was insignificant change in the size of the native population. However, the foreign-born population grew by 63.5%! Indicative of that increase is the 387.3% change in the population who lacks English fluency. A closer look at the next two tables though shed a different light on that whopping number.

Linguistic assimilation is less a problem among the young than the older generations. Out of the 35% that speaks a language other than English

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Population by age and ability to speak English (5 years and over)

	5-17	18-64	65+	Total population 5 & over
Speak English "very well/well" & 2nd language	90%	73%	68.8%	
Do not speak English well(i.e. 2nd language dominant)	10%	27%	31.2%	
actual population by age group that speaks language other than English	6,829 (or 100%)	32,499	2,482	40,780
total by age group	16,516	126,906	19,366	161,686
row 3 as % of total population by age group	38%	26.8%	12.7%	

Population by age and linguistic isolation (5 years and over in households)

	5-13	14-17	18-64	65+	Total
Speak language other than English & feel isolated	45%	27%	34%	33%	
actual numbers	1,770	502	10,961	776	
total by age group (inc. those who don't feel isolated)	3,960	1,867	32,060	2,362	40,249

SOURCE: 1990 census of population and housing STF3

90% say they speak English well/very well. That may also suggest though that native language competency and the benefits of bilinguilism may become more diluted as the child grows older and linguistic assimilation becomes more extensive. (Income level is an additional factor). Breakdown of the 5-17 age group by linguistic isolation* appears to support that assumption although the latter cannot be verified from current census data.

How about the generations of parents and grandparents (18 to 65 and above)? Judging from from the percentages (27% and 31.2% compared with 10%), the older age groups are resources in native language immersion. Utilizing that resource as such, we suggest, may also help counter linguistic isolation.

Because FBPN targets parents and youth, we single out the group of 9,250 preschoolers (that is, 170,936 in total population less 161,686 age five and over) as an asset that calls for special parenting care.

From these data, FBPN identifies a number of opportunities to effect change:
- scrutinize the 'other race' population;
- tap into foreign-born parents AND grandparents as resources in immersion/bicultural education;
- equip them with skills and strategies for active family involvement;
- open wide the window of bilingual opportunity during the preschool years.

*A linguistically isolated person is understood to need help with interpretation from English.

Try this quiz!

1. How large is the foreign-born population in the U.S.?
(a) 1 to 5 million
(b) 10 to 25 million
(c) over 25 million

2. Since the 1990's, the rate of interethnic marriages
(a) has not changed
(b) has doubled
(c) has tripled

3. The percentage of Nobel Peace prize winners that have been immigrants is
(a) 5 to 20% (b) 25 to 40% (c) over 40%

Check our November issue for answers!

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A practical pointer

Listen to this Brazilian-born mother I know:

Q: I called my children for a Portuguese lesson They refused to go along with it! What else can I try?

A: If **YOU** were given the choice between playing and working, which would you rather choose? You were asking your kids to work, and that's no fun! Instead, pull out a family game and start serious play....in Portuguese!

Note: This particular parent tried it and told me it really worked wonders!

FOR YOUNG READERS and PARENTS

A few book titles worth checking out:

• **Child of the Owl** by Lawrence Yep. Harper Trophy, 1977.
The Chinese-American experience as lived by a 12 year old girl, Casey.

• **Cool Salsa, Bilingual Poems on Growing up Latino in the United States**. Edited by Lori M Nelson. Henry Holt & Company, 1994.
A Latino flavor that breathes life and rhythm into words! It's about fitting in the American culture with feelings of hope, through hard times and with nostalgia for things Latino, (lo que se siente) "en la sangre del alma"!

DEFINITION of TERMS

Foreign-born: anyone who was not born in the host-country, in this case the U.S.. A foreign-born may or may not be a U.S. citizen

Bilingual education: a program of learning that teaches essential concepts in the student's first language while allowing him/her to acquire fluency in English.(D. S. Hoopes and M. D. Pusch)

Foreign language immersion: a program of instruction using the foreign language as a medium

Multicultural: characteristic of a society that recognizes a diversity of cultures.

Multicultural education: a learning process that builds upon one's awareness of one's own culture and experience with other cultures through the development of skills of analysis and communication (D. S. Hoopes and M. D. Pusch)

Did you know?

Other than English, **25 distinct languages and groups of languages or dialects** are spoken in Arlington County! A total of **210,777 ancestries** were reported, reflecting the fascinating diversity in national origins! (Origin refers to the country of birth of the person or his/her parent or ancestors **before** they arrived in the U.S.)
Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing STF3

In the metropolitan school system, students speak 127 languages and dialects. In Fairfax County alone, we are talking about more than 100! (*Time*, Fall 1993)

Meet the network's founder

HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE NETWORK!

I am a foreign-born parent of two and a global human resources and management consultant. This network was conceived as a natural linkage between parenting and nurturing youth competencies for career and life success in a multicultural world.

As the product of many cultures, I have always been convinced about the benefit of bonding with people through *their* language and culture. That has stood me in good stead, as an individual, a professional and as a parent.

A s an involved foreign-born parent, I have raised my children bilingual AND appreciative of other cultures as sources of learning. It is much to their credit that our multicultural journey is still continuing, filled as it has been with special enrichment, unexpected fun and improvised excitement!

The pay-off has gone well beyond the gift of bilingualism. We have bonded through the language and culture as much as in the biological sense of the word. Truly, there has been no greater reward!

Alice Thoannes Rasmussen

As a foreign-born parent, you are an **ASSET** to your child and your community too! Here is a sampling of organizations in Arlington that welcome your input:

- Citizen Advisory Committees on Instruction
- The Multicultural Advisory Commission to the Arlington County Board
- The Educational Standards Task Force at the Institute for Educational Transformation (IET) at George Mason University, Fairfax. The Task Force advocates partnerships between families, schools and other community stakeholders to promote excellence in education for all children.

Are you involved locally in other ways that you would like network members to know about?

FBPN's founder is featured in the September isssue of *The Children's Post* owned by Media General of Fairfax Cable!

Since 1992, a number of bicultural couples approached me with their stories. Many had given up raising their kids bilingual. I inspired them to try again. ***This first issue is dedicated to those families.*** As a foreign-born spouse and parent, do YOU identify with the real-life scenarios described below?

- I thought that my kids would **NATURALLY** acquire Spanish. Well, they haven't! I don't want to give up, so what should I do?

- My spouse is American. Our children will grow up here. Won't they be **CONFUSED** speaking two languages? Besides, they won't know which culture they belong to?

- When he was four, my son told me: "I don't want to speak Japanese!" What can I do?

- When my spouse and I have a **DISAGREEMENT** (whether or not it is over child-rearing practices), I tend to look at it from the perspective of my own culture while my spouse doesn't.

- My spouse and in-laws indicated that they feel **EXCLUDED** when I talk with our kids in my native tongue. But I want them to continue speaking it! Any advice on what to do?

- We just got married and plan to have children. We want them to speak French and English. Is there anything we need to know **NOW**?

- I feel **INADEQUATE** because our kids speak English well while **MY** English has not improved much over the years. I have trouble helping with school homework!

Raising global kids has its pay-off... **and** presents its own **challenge!**

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Coming Up in November:

- **our featured foreign-born family**
- **more local area and U.S. census data including highlights by household and income**
- **the three C's to global parenting**
- **the answers to our quiz**
- **FBPN's plans for specific target groups**
- **FBPN's response to Mr. Dole's speech AND**
- **our new letter size!**

Special Note for our Readers

While my enthusiasm drives this networking initiative, it is members that keep it going. Let us know about
- **YOUR** needs, concerns, success **AND**
- how **WE** are doing. For instance, tell us whether a practical tip or strategy we suggested actually helped!

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Other than the newsletter, we offer the following services to institutional and commercial network members:

- **global parenting workshops**
- **global human resources development and consulting**
- **seminars on marketing across cultures**
- **multicultural advertising space.**

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Parenting [illegible] gets

tougher
every day!

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The
FOREIGN-BORN
Parent
NETWORK™
November/December 1995
Issue No. 2

An interactive and multicultural forum
for parent-citizens and partners in education

Alice T. Rasmussen, founder and editor

A Publication of BOND, 2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA 703 812 8716

Readers' response

How well did you like our first issue?

It has generated intense interest from community-based service-providers, universities, PTA's as well as families (not all of which are foreign-born). New institutional susbscribers include George Washington University's School of Education and Human Development, District of Columbia Community Prevention Partnership, Arlington Central Library, Department of Human Services (Project Family), Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) and Arlington Public School Community Services.

Here are some of **YOUR** reactions and requests:
- "I have been waiting for a resource like this one for years!"
- "I support what you do!"
- fills the gap for a multicultural parenting model
- making it available in other languages is a great idea
- include some research data on bilingual/multicultural issues and related writings
- less census information
- more on parenting skills and strategies
- interactive is the way to go!

We thank our readers for their feedback and, as space allows, will balance the newsletter's various features.

Let me say though that in the previous issue, the census data about Arlington were intended to shock. For some of you, the statistics were indeed "shocking". Along with the spate of recent articles in the *Washington Post* about ethnic diversity (in both numbers and perceptions), a sense of urgency may be beginning to take hold, one which FBPN has identified as being the essential premise of the newsletter: **Adults were never taught to be parents to begin with. How equipped are we to raise our children to be citizens and leaders in a multicultural world? Or have we even thought about it?**

The bottom-line is truly citizen education. Looking at parenting in that light means that educating tomorrow's leaders by the exact-

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1 Enthusiastic response to FBPN's first issue

2 Mr. Dole, how multicultural was *your* world when you were growing up?

3 Global learning and leadership: Connect the three C's with the three I's

5 Our foreign-born family (incl. practical tips for bicultural couples and parents)

6 • Looking ahead: Foreign-born target groups
• What has a second culture got to do with school standards? Answer: A great deal!

7 Brief highlights by household and income for Arlington

The answers to our quiz!

1. The foreign-born population was 22.6 million in 1994, or 8.7% of the total U.S. population (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, *Current Population Reports*, August 1995)
2. The rate of interethnic marriages is triple what it was in the 1970's (*Time*, Fall 1993)
3. Since 1901, 30% of American Nobel Prize winners have been immigrants (*Time*, Fall 1993)

ing standards of the 21st century ceases to be just a "family affair". It becomes a 'citizen affair' and a community's concern. As parent-citizens, we need to mobilize for action. By way of inspiration, we'd like to share the **three T's of active involvement, i.e take a proactive stand, take preventive action and take charge for the sake of children. They are our multicultural human capital, our cause and common bond.**

Talking about multiculturalism, here is FBPN's response to Senator Dole's speech concerning 'English only' as the sole unifying force for our multicultural society.

About the supremacy of English

To Senator Dole

*Mr. Dole, your speech makes an assumption that no struggling immigrant, teacher or school official is ready to dispute. It is that English is critical to the immigrant's survival and economic success. Underlying the apparent dissension is, it would seem, an agreement **rather** than a disagreement with you on the subject. So, what is the real issue?*

In our view, the heart of the matter is about *how* families cope and how the rest of the community (including the business community) responds. To place this three-way relationship in perspective, we further need to consider bilingualism as a coping medium against the background of cultural integration over time. The time factor is significant and suggests that we ought to adopt a long term view to make better sense of foreign-born statistics rather than give in to panic (as seems apparent in your speech).

"That the U.S. is-and will remain-an English-speaking nation has yet to be seriously called into question."
Time, Fall 1993

To begin with, let's look at how the language issue (among other things) affects the dynamics of the parent-child relationship over time. Early on in the process of integration, parents with little fluency in English depend on their children as a vital link with the world outside their ethnic community. This dependency turns the conventional parent-child relationship upside down (*The New York Times*, Oct. 1, 1995), unearthing what we might call the 'hidden value' of immigrant children. Because children grow up speaking the **native tongue in the family alonside English in school**, bilingual skills dominate as a transitional medium, an essential coping tool.

Should schools offer bilingual education? To conservatives who fear the loss of supremacy of English, the voice of panic says 'no'. But to the struggling child and parent, there may be no other livable option, at least during the transitional period of cultural and language adjustment. Does that mean that English is threatened with extinction? The answer is 'no'. Because bilingualism remains, for the most part, a *local* concern (*Time*, Fall 1993).

On the timeline toward cultural mainstreaming,
- ethnic groups tend to intermarry (see quiz answer to question #2),
- income levels tend to rise with length of residence and educational opportunities (U.S. Department of Commerce, *Current Population Reports*, Aug. 1995) and
- English becomes dominant.

In the process, there occurs a shift away from bilingual abilities as a survival imperative to bilingual fluency as a value-added skill, **but one which subsequent generations may not be able to preserve** (see p. 7). Thus, we propose that dual immersion, i.e. 'go native at home and English at school' be continued *beyond* the coping stage.

In a world of rapid transformation, today's prevailing norms become tomorrow's old standards. Similarly, today's dependent parent with minimal English fluency becomes, we would like to suggest, tomorrow's native language and culture expert to the child *and* schools. *Foreign-born parent-resources can be utilized across generations and across ethnic lines to maintain a healthy synergy between the native and host-country culture*. Indeed, for the foreseeable future, a job applicant's trump card is job skills *plus* bilingual fluency and multicultural competencies (*Doing Business Internationally: The Guide to Cross-cultural Success*, T. Brake *and al*, Irwin, 1995).

Due to oversight, the September issue incorrectly stated two questions. Question #2 should have read: Since the 1970's (rather than 1990's), the rate of interethnic marriages has.... And question # 3 should have been: The percentage of Nobel winners (rather than Nobel Peace winners) that have been immigrants is.... We apologize for the errors.

Even as second-language skills are sought after at the workplace, employers struggle with the dilemma of how much is enough, where and when (*Employment Review*, Aug. 1995). All in all, it seems like natives and foreign-born alike need to engage in a balancing act, i.e. thriving on the multicultural benefit of diversity while minimizing its polarizing effect. Certainly, polarizing the language issue the way your speech did is not an effective way to address it.

As we, parent-citizens negotiate the dialogue across generations and across ethnic lines, we have to mind the future of community leadership. To us, your legitimate concern about a common bond clearly indicates the urgent need for *global citizen and leadership education*. It is in that context that FBPN addresses this question to you: How multicultural was *your* world when you were growing up?

"Teens know their world is multicultural, even if grown-ups don't...."

- About three-fourths of 12-to-17 year olds say schools offer little information about Muslims.
- Two-thirds say they know little about "Africans before they came to this country" and about nonwhite women.

1991 Gallup poll as reported in *American Demographics*, Oct. 1995

The September 1995 issue of *The Education Digest* featured an article with this heading: "The Way We Weren't Can't Help Today's Kids". **The younger generation needs a multicultural model that goes beyond typical concentration in ethnic cubicles. The education of tomorrow's multicultural leaders begins yesterday.**

Beyond bilingual skills toward personal competence in a multicultural society

Global learning and leadership: Connect the three C's with the three I's

Raising and educating tomorrow's leaders requires that we take a stand

- *away from segregation (as experienced by the older half of the original baby boom now aged 31 to 49, that is, you and me) toward integration (which is what our kids' generation is all about). It also suggests a frame of mind that moves*
- *beyond bicultural abilities toward multicultural fluency. Why? Because today's kids are growing up in a society that is radically more diverse in race, family characteristics and socioeconomic backgrounds. And also, because the threat of ethnic/racial polarization has an economic dimension that is based on "the access to technology and the ability to build important skills early in life" (American Demographics*, Oct. 1995)

During unsettling and uncertain times, the issue of cultural identity increasingly becomes one of security. But look at it this way! However divisive and divided, the current social environment is fertile ground for nurturing flexibility of mind and multicultural competencies. Should we count on schools to do that? FBPN's answer is a qualified 'yes' mainly because school resources are shrinking, but most of all, because global parents may be *the* most convincing leadership role model for global kids.

So, youngsters know that their world is multicultural. The real question is: Are they equipped to make sense of it? This question begs another one: Are *we* (i.e. parents, teachers, educators) equipping them with the skills and color-blind sensitivity they need to lead in a global century? If we aren't already, then **the three C's of purposeful engagement, i.e. Choice, Commitment and Consistency** might be an appropriate beginning.

Choice=Commitment=Consistency

Choosing the path of global parenting is a priority that needs to be clearly stated in our own mind. Given the scarce time, resources and energy available to us, it takes a strong **commitment** to keep us mindful of how to manage those resources and what information and skills we need. Yet, unless we see consistent results, we still might be short on commitment. And need we say it, there can be no consistent results unless there is **consistent** effort.

How do the three C's help kids make sense of their multicultural world?

As long as we commit ourselves to act as global role models youngsters can look up to. The window of opportunity is wide open during the preschool/elementary years, when kids are curious, naturally trusting and free of preconceived notions and stereotypes that burden grown-ups. Sow the seeds early, and young adults will be more equipped to cope and succeed in life

What does it mean to be a 'global role model'?

It means applying the **skills of intercultural**

problem-solving the characteristics of which are the three I's, that is, integrative, inclusive and international.

- Integrative means bridging the artificial barriers between disciplines to show kids the inter-connectedness of concepts.
- Inclusive puts the teacher-learner or parent-child relationship on its head by stressing 360 degree learning. As they tune into the global age, the leaders of tomorrow must connect with the best, partner with the most competent wherever they may be, of whatever race, age, social status or culture they may be. Thus, the third characteristic is international.
- International focuses the development of analytical and communication skills around basic themes that drive the human experience regardless of the culture. Those themes relate to men's need for shelter, clothing, food, health, information and play.

To prepare the next generation of multicultural leaders, we, parent-citizens only need the power of a vision, the strength of inclusive values that transcend ethnic differences and the dedication to a common purpose. Our initial objective has been to convey that sense of purpose to FBPN's readers.

Some of you though may wonder how global parenting benefits the foreign-born and working poor who struggle to put food on the table. What follows is FBPN's view on that.

The need for an inclusive framework that connects parents, schools, communities and employers

The argument may be that global parenting is a distant concern when parenting time is scarce and English is a barrier for parental involvement? To put things in perspective, time has become a scarce commodity for *all* families these days, not just the working poor. On the language barrier, we believe that when parents are long on commitment and equipped with proper information, strategies and skills, any linguistic medium is appropriate in the home. That being said though, no resource alone can address the specific needs of working parents and especially, the working poor (whether or not they are foreign-born). There needs to be a concerted effort using inclusive strategies to connect all families, schools, local communities and employers, that is, the partners in education as they, together, face the opportunities and constraints of global transformation.

In our September issue, FBPN identified the stakes for schools as they cope with an increasing immigrant population. For their part, employers still have a fair way to go to show that diversity is a full commitment rather than just a programmatic initiative. Here are a few figures.

Even as cultural diversity awareness leads diversity efforts (84%), employee time devoted to the issue is just 10.8 hour per year on average and only 40% of surveyed employers recognize diversity as a business issue (1994 survey of top human resources professionals at *Fortune 500* manufacturing services, *Personnel Journal*, Aug. 1995).

Work family issues have gained momentum in various forms. However, there exists a wide disparity among employers as to the kind of family-friendly benefits employees can enjoy. It is equally clear that the working poor (that is, those in low-skilled jobs) are still the neglected mass (*Washington Post Business*, Sept. 19, 1995). To put it bluntly, the foreign-born and working poor cannot be more involved in their children's education unless employers allow them more time for it. The knowledge-based economy generates and feeds on a 'global elite', the ones fit to survive. If that should continue at the detriment of a broader, *all-inclusive* social context, economic prosperity for all will remain elusive.

As a practical resource, we identify strategic directions to develop the community's multicultural asset in ways that benefit all partners in education. FBPN's networking plans reflect that objective and are summarized in table form on p. 6.

How do we get all parents involved?

By

- identifying what their real needs and resources are
- providing concrete help with daily challenges
- investing in infrastructure and ongoing support networks.

Adapted from *The Education Digest*, The Way We Weren't, Sept./Oct. 1995

What has global parenting got to do with civic leadership?

Looking ahead, global parent-citizens make the difference between color-bound complacency and color-free civic-minded leadership.

Call World Affairs Council (202) 293-1051 about the Oct. 30-Nov. 1 civic leadership summit in Washington D.C.

Put the three C's to work for you!

Our foreign-born family: Re-energized by a sense of purpose!

If you are a bicultural couple struggling to raise bilingual kids, Dalva A. de Faria-Toulouse may inspire you. As she commits herself ***anew*** *to that challenge, she finds herself in a learner's role as much as her kids are. Along with renewed focus, realizing that one is continually learning may be one of the most effective mechanisms we, adults have for coping.*

For Dalva and Paul, her American husband, the idea of immersing their children in Portuguese was appealing enough to inspire Paul to study the language. But obstacles were larger than the opportunities they had envisioned.

Two out of the seven real-life scenarios listed in the Sept. issue apply to this couple, from in-law's resistance (scenario #5) to the inability to get successful results (scenario #1). Every possible communication technique was tried at high cost, it seems, with minimal results. Paul couldn't go beyond the beginner's level and gave up frustrated! Instantaneous interpretation for the benefit of husband, kids and kids' friends eventually became cumbersome! In truth, for this Brazilian-born parent, raising bilingual kids was far from being a *natural* course of events. *In truth, it isn't, at least not until parents choose to commit themselves to it.* And Dalva recently made that choice. It hasn't been easy because their kids are older now (at eight, six and a half and four and a half) and also, because of new career interests at the present time.

For the sake of balance, only two of Dalva's most pressing questions are addressed here. Others will be presented in future issues as *we respond to parents' concerns on an ongoing basis.* Share your concerns with us by calling/faxing: (703) 812-8716. Or e-mail us: arasmus1@gmu.edu

What were two of Dalva's greatest concerns at this time?

Q: The kids can follow instructions in Portuguese. When they try beyond the few words they already know, the effort frustrates them.

A: To ease their transition into Portuguese, equip them with this question stated in Portuguese: "How do you say (from English) into Portuguese?" What you are actually doing is empower your kids! The result? Rather than one or two disconnected words, they will be able to say a whole sentence, and more than once! Plus, the more empowered they feel, the less place there is for frustration.

Q: Talking about busy parents, some days, there just is no time for Portuguese. And I can't even complain: I am a stay-at-home parent and occasional student.

A: Look at it this way. *Other* days, there may be more opportunities to concentrate on '*quality time*'. Whatever time you have can be stretched in different ways and by expanding your arsenal of resources. Begin with this: cut back on TV time (Heard that before?). Check out the American-Brazilian Institure for events that expose them to Portuguese.

Dalva shared with me that her kids' traits are predominantly American, not just in their mastery of English, but also in their social demeanor and spontaneous choice of play. But, now more than ever, she feels strongly about connecting them with their Brazilian heritage, if only so that they can communicate with Mom's side of the family. This balanced view may be typical of individuals born of one culture with extensive exposure to another or other cultures. The "third culture" perspective is neither the primary culture nor the host culture, but a 'balancing' of both. (M. Pusch, adapted from Useem, Useem & Donahue, 1963).

In the bicultural couple's experience, the second culture typically heightens the foreign-born parent's perception of what is oftentimes taken for granted, i.e. one's ability to communicate with loved ones and others beyond the immediate family. Some couples seek easier alternatives to speaking two languages at home. Although an outsider (i.e., a school or baby-sitter with the language facility) may meet their immediate needs, we see the language and cultural bonding between the foreign-born parent and child as quite unique to successful

global parenting.

In fact, to go beyond bilingualism toward a fuller appreciation of all cultures, our recommendation is to devise a plan of action that fits your personality (and that of your child), time availability and resources. We sketch one for your review in the January issue. Looking ahead, put the three C's to work for you! Do *you* have a plan of action? Call if you should need help with it!

Help us identify foreign-born families!

We are aware that behind the statistics are the faces of courage, the acts of inspiration. Are they in your community, school and workplace? Foreign-born parents and children are our concern regardless of ethnic or racial background and economic status.

We keep names confidential to protect individuals' right to privacy if they so choose.

What does a second culture have to do with school standards? Answer: A great deal!

As an Asian-born, I evaluate my daughter' progress based on my past experience with a school system that is much more demanding than her American school. As a global human resources professional, I also subscribe to world-best standards of performance (including academic) and deplore the fact that the 'best' standard demanded of students even in one of the better rated schools in Arlington is in fact *sub*-standard.

The teacher and I disagree on this. My American husband supports her. In this situation, the issue of standards goes beyond our relationship as a bicultural couple. It strikes at the heart of an equally important issue, that of parental involvement in school.

This situation requires a resolution. So, our question to network members is: What would you do next? Thank you for calling/ faxing in your suggestions at (703) 812 8716.

Alone, we struggle, bonded we are assets!

By way of summary, the table below presents our initial thoughts on who our target groups are and how to interconnect them. Are there others? Let us know.

FBPN's target groups and networking plans

(1)	(2) DOMINANT CHARACTERISTICS	(3) STRATEGIC FOCUS	(4) ANTICIPATED ACTION
II. SELF-EMPLOYED AND BUSINESS-OWNERS (with or without children)	educated, professional untapped resources bi- or multilingual abilities	intergenerational role model entrepreneurial and business skills	outsourcing opportunities; networking for support and growth; global career project for youth ; mentoring in parent to parent projects; survey of numbers and strengths
II. FOREIGN-BORN AND WORKING POOR	economic survival is immediate priority; monocultural and monolingual; children are 'hidden value'	intergenerational focus for deployment of resources to facilitate parental involvement; family/diversity policy framework; partnership with employers and human services agencies	define employment contracts; identify work/family and diversity strategies to track and promote talent regardless of ethnic origin;support network (with schools/employers); survey of multiethnic (i e mixed race or 'other race') population needs and strengths
III. GLOBE-TROTTING FAMILIES	extensive exposure to international cultures; government/international employers; highly mobile,educated bi- or monocultural;	networking across cultures and employer groups; expatriation/repatriation and work/family health; family to family networking	multicultural youth project connecting youth from groups (I), (II) and (III); multicultural family to family project from groups (1), (II) and (III); survey of numbers, needs and strengths
IV. BICULTURAL COUPLES (one or two-income families)	multiethnic kids; parents may or may not be successful in raising their kids bilingual and multiculturally competent	intergenerational using grandparents and parents as resources in native language immersion/bicultural education	from bicultural to multicultural fluency skill training; support network
V. FOREIGN-BORN WITH UNIQUE NEEDS, i.e. handicapped or born of bicultural couples with the stigma of the last World War	unique needs may affect perception of self-identity and that of loved ones;	inter- and intra-generational; networking with projects for handicapped/human services agencies	survey of numbers,needs and strengths

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These may be overlapping categories, which suggests the potential effectiveness of intergroup and intergenerational foci of action (col. 3 and 4). We can only begin to envision the opportunities for synergy across cultures. Indeed, in today's multicultural society, learning knows no race, age or ethnic origin.

Beyond the printed word, FBPN will expand its network through a *Multicultural Association of Parent-Citizens* (MAPaC). 'MAP' because we put foreign-born assets on the map! And 'PaC' because we, parents are energized in purpose and bonded in action. As such, we add strength and vibrancy to our local community rather than take away from it!

Our association is to begin with a survey of FBPN members planned for early 1996. In the meantime, call/fax at (703) 812-8716 to share your thoughts on this. A number of you already bought into the idea, and that truly is exciting!

Household and income data for Arlington: Not what you might expect!

Myth: Arlington's Asian Americans are the most successful economically.

Fact: Think again! They rank third behind American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut and White households in terms of income over $50,000, per capita and median income. And American Indian, Eskimo and Aleut are the smallest minority group (with a total of only 146 households)!

Household*and income by race for Arlington County

	White	Amer. Ind., Eskimo, Aleut	Asian, Pacific Islander	Black	Other race	Hispanic	Total
% of households by race with income > $50,000	47.5% of 64,577 households	44.5% of 146 households	31.2% of 3,615 households	22.4% of 7,298 households	20.7% of 2,909 households	23.7% of 6,907 households	78,745 households
Per capita income	29,249	18,645	15,173	15,260	9,716	11,357	
Median income	48,141	44,866	36,726	30,074	31,175	32,907	

Source: 1990 Census Summary Tape File 3A on Household and Income in 1989

More revealing facts!

- The disparity between haves and have-nots is more striking *within* Black, Hispanic and 'Other race' household populations than it is *between* those various groups. That is, in each of those categories, less than 1 out of 4 has income over $50,000.
- With almost *twice as many* Black as Asian households, the gap in income level is even wider among Blacks. That is also true of the Hispanic and 'Other race' households within their respective population.
- In the Sept. issue, we suggested that the mixed or multiethnic 'Other race' category could be a potential measure of bi- and multicultural resources for their various ethnic communities. This particular group seems to fare less well economically when compared with other groups.

A number of remarks can be made here:

- Inclusive strategies *both* within and across ethnic communities make good civic and economic sense in bonding the foreign-born for multicultural leadership. As identified on p. 6, FBPN's 'bonding' plans follow that strategic direction. (see col. 3 and 4)
- A truer measure of economic success by ethnic category would be their 'effective buying income', also known as disposable income (*Sales and Marketing Management annual survey*, Aug. 1995). A topic in itself in future FBPN issues! And lastly,
- The 'Other race' population *does* need closer attention, both from the perspective of multicultural asset development (as pointed out in the last issue) and now, we find out, from that of economic development and well-being (see col. 4, row II).

* A household includes all individuals occupying a housing unit. It is classified by the race of the householder rather than the race of individual occupants.

The benefits of a second language faaaaades.... with the years!

	0-10 yrs in the U.S.	11-20 yrs in the U.S.	21+ yrs in the U.S.
English	49	57	81
Non-English	50	42	19

Source: Gallup poll May 25-June 4, 1995, *The Public Perspective*, p.14, Aug/Sept. 1995

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—— particular concerns about getting involved in your child's school
—— writing a short article about your favorite bilingual/multicultural topic
—— global parenting strategies that work in your family and related concerns

Other:

For young readers and parents

In America by Marissa Moss, Dutton, 1994
An engaging resource for parents to share with a youngster what ethnic bias is about!

America Street, A Multicultural Anthology of Stories. Ed. by Anne Mazer, Persea Books, 1993
I certainly identify with Susan, one of the characters's remark: "It's boring being with the same bunch of people all the time." If you should feel that way, then come meet the people of Hamadi (Lebanon), la Mama de San Sosti (Italy)... and more from America Street! For elementary age and beyond.

Check these out at Arlingon Central Library!

In our next issue

- FBPN's pre-association survey
- Put the three C's to work with a plan of action that does not alienate the in-laws!
- The foreign-born professionals and business-owners as role models for immigrant parents and youth: strength in skills and numbers!
- Book review: *Intercultural marriages: Promises and Pitfalls* by Dugan Romano

The Foreign-born Parent Network is published every two months by BOND (Business, Organization and Network Development), a global human resources and management consulting business. FBPN's mission is to offer an interactive platform that focuses on the ways in which multiculturalism affects parental involvement in education, community leadership and the workplace. Copyright 1995 by FBPN and ISSN application in progress.

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The
FOREIGN-BORN
Parent
NETWORK™

January/February 1996
Issue No. 3

An interactive and multicultural forum
for parent-citizens and partners in education

Alice T. Rasmussen, founder and editor

A Publication of BOND, 2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA 703 812 8716

EDITOR

Our grassroots initiative is making a difference one on one!

And that's the best I could hope for on the threshold of this new year... But then, we are also pushing that best ever higher, with renewed energy and your continued feedback.

Indeed, your recent comments say it all (see p. 4). If we are in the business of inspiring, we also want those who have been inspired to inspire you too. So, this issue features an article by Dawnn Burwell (on p. 6), a FBPN member for whom making a difference out there 'in the field' bears the kind of results that armchair strategizing may not.

Scoring even small successes is uplifting and creates an opportunity for reflection. As I reflect on this, and to share a supporter's reaction from Bolivia, I believe that the **'practice and discipline of dialogue'** (to borrow from Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline*) is what really did it. Although personality may matter, getting into the discipline of doing it with people *outside of one's comfort zone* engenders trust and goodwill while generating opportunities for mutual learning. The benefit of multicultural exposure is captured in the concept of the 'hyphenated' parent and child, one which FBPN proposes as a viable, upbeat and enduring self-concept fit for our multicultural time.

1996 welcomes fresh, concrete ideas from current and new members like you as we prepare for an exciting parenting seminar for World Bank families and radio programs in the spring on WUST AM1120, a multilingual and multicultural station! We would especially like to hear your thoughts on the radio program and possible projects involving the various foreign-born groups identified in our previous issue.

As members and significant players, what resources could FBPN extend to you live on radio? What expertise do you have that a project *for and by* foreign-born families could promote? If you should agree that we, parents must learn from one another to make our community a trusting and safe haven for all, then what could a multicultural association of concerned parents do for you? To answer those and other questions, a get-to-know-you exchange might be a timely idea (in place of a survey as announced in our Nov./Dec. issue). Let us know your preference by returning the short form on p. 7.

FBPN expands its information resources to include a review of publications of interest to our readers. The present issue features "*Intercultural Marriages: Promises and Pitfalls*" by D. Romano on p. 6. Let us know how FBPN's agenda (on p. 3) could best serve our cause. Enjoy the game plan on p. 4 and 'Tips for busy, working parents' on p. 7! What practical pointers do *you* have that might benefit our readers? Let us know and until we meet, Happy New Year to all!

Editor

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Our mission

We are a peer resource, advocate and multicultural support network for foreign-born parents whose lives are touched by the interaction between the home- and host-country cultures. We engage parents in a dialogue on how that cultural interaction affects parental involvement in education, language learning, bicultural marriages, the workplace, school and community. Copyright FBPN 1995 in progress.

Who we are

FBPN is an upbeat publication based on its founder's experience as a spouse in a bicultural marriage and a foreign-born parent whose personal mission has been to preserve the home culture while thriving in the host-culture.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) is published every two months by BOND (**B**usiness, **O**rganization and **N**etwork **D**evelopment), a global human resources consulting and training business.

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Transforming ourselves in solidarity

The 'hyphenated' parent and child

This ever-changing world challenges our sense of solidarity and puts it to the test. In truth, I see no contradiction between claiming one's cultural roots and building on the accumulated richness of multicultural exposure. As I move from one to the other, I stay on a learning mode to enjoy the best of all worlds.

Let me explain. I see myself as Vietnamese (my native origin)-French (my first country of adoption of which I am a citizen)-American (my second country of adoption and I am also married to one)-'hispano/iberica' (I speak Spanish as the result of extensive and deliberate exposure)-Thai (which I also speak, having grown fond of its people after five years in the country). My kids's cultural attribute embraces the first three of these. The more hyphens, I would argue, the more fit we may be to thrive in a multicultural society. The 'hyphenated' identity concept could effectively guide youngsters (who will come of age in 20 years or so) as they negotiate their own dialogue with peers without loss of esteem, anger, fear or shame.

Do the French know something other cultures ought to know?

The French translation for 'hyphen' is 'trait d'union', that is, a line that *unites* rather than divides. How is that for *solidarity across cultures*?

FBPN's editor

Some people have argued that this self-concept may not be 'politically correct'. I will say, in response, that correctness is measured in terms of right *vs* wrong, two notions which in culture, as in life, are but relative. That is to say, the 'hyphenated' individual does *not* reject his native culture for any other. He/she *is* both and maybe more! Neither is he/she "likely to lose, in very large measure, the original cultural conditioning" (D. Hoopes). The 'hyphenated' self-concept emphasizes 'adapting and learning' over 'adopting'. Its message is 'appropriateness of behavioral skills' rather than 'correctness of opinion'. In other words, as a 'hyphenated' individual, I problem-solve as an Asian in the company of Asians while, for instance, drawing on the best of what is American when the situation calls for it. While language fluency aids intercultural communication, the ability to transition between cultures is a defining asset.

My path has crossed those of many parents who did not communicate in the native language with their kids for fear of cultural confusion (scenario #2 in the September issue). They now regret it immensely! As I reflect on their need for reassurance,

my thought is that those parents may be projecting their unconscious fear into the situation rather than sizing up the bilingual opportunity for what it could be and what it truly is.

What could 'cultural identity' mean to youngsters? In my experience, a lot less than what they actually *hear* or *see*. They hear a different language being spoken. They see visible marks of ethnic distinction (i.e. skin color, eye features, hair type). And *that* sticks with them whereas culture is likely to be an arcane notion. So, in the end, cultural confusion may be less of an issue for youngsters. What takes precedence is the parent-child bonding through language. In fact, a youngster acquires the first language by personal association with the parent who uses it as the primary mode of communication and medium for socialization. Research further shows that parents should encourage the young child's interest and ability in the home language because it is developmentally appropriate to do so (Wong-Fillmore in ERIC Digest, April 1993)

And lest we forget, a language can be learned whereas culture is not. Culture is something we typically take for granted that is passed from one generation to another. For that reason, intercultural problem-solving is another developmentally appropriate activity where "the goal is not to teach children about [different] cultures but rather to help children become accustomed to the idea that there may be many life styles, languages and points of view." (Ramsey, 1982). Consistent with the three I's identified in our previous issue, the 'hyphenated' self-concept could serve parents particularly well in that task.

When you think of it, it is a concept that keeps the dialogue across cultures moving, human kindness flowing, and empathy blooming as a result. Indeed, "empathy is the essence of connection." (R. Caldwell, *Pathways*, Winter 95-96). Along with bilingualism, the 'hyphenated' self-concept may be the most positive image we can construct in youngsters' minds.

Are youngsters prejudiced?

The answer is a resounding yes! A study of 254 children in KG through 6th grade sought to measure youngsters' prejudice in terms of gender, body type and ethnicity.

Findings: The youngest were consistently prejudiced, thinking that people who are like them have positive qualities while those who are different have negative qualities.

Explanations: In-group favoritism and mental development.

The study further indicates that experience and maturation reduce prejudice.

Working Mother, Dec. 1995

Note for our readers

The present issue features a game plan for parents instead of the regular foreign-born family interview. Neither were statistics on foreign-born professionals included due to the unexpected length of some of our featured articles.

From home to community

FBPN's Agenda

Although the home/family are our top priority, kids' sense of belonging extends well beyond the family. Their safety net can be appreciated in terms of the family/ school/ community 'rippling' effect. Ought we not to keep that safety net intact?*

As a home-grown, grassroots endeavour, we aspire to inspire wherever we perceive a need. Thus, we put forward to our members the agenda that follows. We intend for this agenda (and FBPN's mission as proposed on p. 2) to be discussed at a future member exchange, the location of which is soon to be determined (please return form on p. 7).

We strive to achieve three things:

1. Set an inclusive standard of competence for youth and model it. We believe in coming together as parents and advocates across generations and across ethnic lines to partake in the larger community dialogue for the sake of our youth.

2. Identify a supportive, multicultural network that is to connect our needs with services in such a way that we may preserve our self-identified uniqueness while thriving academically, socially and economically.

3. Make short- and long-range connections within the local *and* global communities through grassroots and other identified initiatives so that we continue to build foreign-born assets with measurable success.

We propose that this agenda be driven by a **culture of dialogue. Our dialogue begins and continues with you through mutual learning and bonding in need and leadership.**

* "(Young people) make clear that neither families nor schools now offer them enough time, activity, safety, or sense of sanctuary." (*Truths to Tell*, A paper by S. B. Heath and S. DeWitt, Stanford U., Dec. 1994)

Equip yourself with a language/culture preservation plan

A game plan for parents

Try it and you are off to a good start for two reasons! First, a plan, any plan for that matter, beats scattered efforts. Secondly, a game mindset gains a child's acceptance because he sees it as worth his time and effort. The one we propose here is, as its name indicates, a plan rather than a prescription. It is for you to refine and adapt to suit individual and family time, your resources and creativity. The plan guidelines are sound; its success is up to you and the level and extent of your adherence to the three C's of Choice, Commitment and Consistency (as outlined in our Nov/Dec. issue).

Set?

Begin with the end

Did you know that there are various *degrees* of language competence on the spectrum of bilingualism? Visualize your end goal:

- Do I see my child communicating, reading and writing fluently in the target language?
- Do I see him/her at just a functional level of comprehension, meaning, "as long as my child understands what I say, that's fine!"
- Do I see him/her at a functional level of comprehension and oral communication? Situated anywhere on the spectrum between the previous two, this level includes various degrees of communicative ability.

Starting with your end goal is key! Why? Because
- once you have made the *choice*, i.e. "Yes, I want my child to speak the home language!",
- the end goal defines the intensity of your *commitment*, i.e. "how much of an effort am I willing to expend?", which then,
- determines how *consistent* you will need to be in the choice of strategies and frequency of communication in the home language.

Now, identify your ultimate goal!

How are we doing?

"Your home-grown initiative will touch the lives of families in a way that a much wider scope project is less likely to do."

Marcela Von Vacano
Arlington, VA

"The three C's made a big difference in my ability to keep Spanish going in the home with my kids."

Irma Rosario
Vienna, VA

"Your upbeat newsletter changed the course of my life. Before, I wasn't sure I would find a way to get Max (my 3 yr old) to speak French. Now, I know that I can succeed, and in fact, have started French playgroups in my neighborhood!"

Isabelle Pollacco,
Washington, D.C.

"I am seeing that the wall between my kids and Portuguese has broken down! Instead of resistance, there has been receptiveness."

Dalva de Faria-Toulouse

As Naomi Baron (*Growing up with Language: How Children Learn to Talk*, 1992) correctly points out in a separate article: "A person's degree of bilingualism is a product of both opportunity and motivation." And I'd like to add: There may be as many or as few opportunities as you are willing to create. Motivation applies to both you and your child.

On your mark, ...

... Go for quality if not quantity

....although there ought to be a healthy dose of both for those of us with abundant time! The key here is strategies to make the most of opportunities and increase motivation.

This newsletter supports your effort *on a continuing basis* with applicable strategies, techniques and practical pointers in the area of communication, language learning, parental involvement in school and homework as well as resource deployment. *We help you target your effort.* And, as shown in parents' testimonials on this page, those strategies and techniques work!

... Go for variety!

"Variety is the spice of life" is a statement that is particularly true of your child's bilingual adventure! Translation: vary games, partners and resources in general to keep his/her interest bouncing and alive.

... Go for play and targeted practice

- Fun fun, fun is the name of the game
- practice disguised as fun, with a purpose and in appropriate amount; and
- let your child's interests guide you in the choice of play, what to practice and when.

... Go for rituals early on to settle you and your child into a mindset

The importance of rituals is recognized as helping build family values. They provide a sense of security, and a child who feels safe is better disposed to learn. In home language preservation, identifiable routines are part of the 'frame' within which language acquisition occurs.

What rituals turn you and your child on?

Rituals engage the parent's *undivided* attention. It can be a short language/culture immersion on a daily basis, even every two days. Incremental gains are significant and, as parents indicated in their testimonial, your kid's response will affirm your commitment. Make your language bonding time purposeful, fun and varied. In fact, the angle of approach is as significant as the ritual itself.

... Go for a varied approach

Visualize yourself in the center of three rippling circles from home to extended family to larger community. Each circle corresponds to a dominant angle of approach:

• In the first circle, the home language is the *only* medium of communication between you and your child. As he/she associates it with you, take care to nurture a positive attitude toward the language and its people. How *you* perceive the status of the language and its people is equally important in your child's language acquisition (Feenstra, 1969; Lamber & Klineberg, 1967). In this first circle, you play the leading role early on while your child's interests set the tempo.

• The next circle includes relatives on both sides. How well *informed* and supportive of your vision are they? Common concerns shared by foreign-born parents are of two types. Either their kids won't speak *their* native language in the presence of *others* who don't speak it or instantaneous interpretation strains their energy. To steer away from the 'we *vs* they' mentality, two approaches can be used. One is preventive, the other proactive. The three C's may be the most effective preventive tool in your favor. As a result of the 'personalization' of the use of language, your child's sense of belonging and acceptance may not need additional sanction by others.

With a proactive plan, you may not have to interpret and are less likely to alienate the in-laws! In the second circle, you alternate between leading and coaching. Lead by informing. Information helps create a favorable climate. Short of outright approval (which I initially did not get from my own spouse), you gain the acceptance and respect of significant others. Another proactive behavior calls for coaching skills. As you nurture the special parent and child bond, guide your child on ways to turn his/her asset into a learning experience with cousins and grandparents (i.e. across generations) at opportune times.

• the last circle includes your friends, your kid's friends, school representatives, your ethnic and the larger community. The opportunities for interaction are the most varied here, and your part as a parent is to recognize the opportunity to optimize those connections and the resources they may represent given your own time and resource allocations. Personally, I have concentrated on two particular areas: a home agenda that weaves relevance into language, culture and content learning and a multicultural network where my kids can apply some of that learning. Transitioning between the leading and coaching role remains a useful approach and occurs in a wider arena, with your maturing child playing a more significant part in *your* learning as much as his/her own.

A U.S. benchmarking study compares foreign and U.S. models of language education

... to understand how languages are taught around the world and in which social, political and educational context. Phase I of this recent study focused on the teaching of Spanish, French, German, Japanese and English-as-a-Second Language.

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning, Fall 1995

FBPN Note:
The purpose of benchmarking is to improve an existing model as we look *outside* of what we know and outside of our comfort zone to make a fresh start and see where we might fit in the bigger picture. This is to say that the foreign-born are resources that fit in the U.S. scheme of things because of our experience in different school systems!

And here comes what I believe is a credible argument for coaching parents *and* kids to be partners in leadership, for everyone's sake. Presently, the emphasis on leadership/coaching abilities has been to benefit either the diverse workplace or the multicultural community at-large *whereas* they could systematically benefit foreign-born families who are direct players in the dramatic encounter of two and sometimes more cultures. Another common occurrence has been to provide that type of training (along with conflict resolution skills) in the aftermath of an ethnic flare up *rather* than proactively to prevent conflict. Perhaps, some rethinking is in order.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reaching out combines heart and people strategy

Trust is everything!

by Dawnn Burwell

As this parent's initiative suggests, information is key while touching the heart and pride of foreign-born parents through their kids earns trust dividends.

I selected the challenge of becoming the ESL liaison for the Poplar Tree Elementary School PTA in Chantilly, Virginia because very little had been done in the past for this segment of the school population by the PTA.

On the surface, some might question why I would take this job since I am not foreign-born. But as an African-American woman who has lived in this country and dealt with various forms of discrimination for most of my life, I understand some of the deep seeded problems that someone with a different culture must endure in this country. Yet, I wondered how I would be accepted by the ESL parents, and how effective I could be without knowing their different cultures. I had no idea how to overcome such an overwhelming task.

But my fears were quickly put to rest on Back To School Night last September, when I was introduced to parents as the PTA liaison and explained what the PTA meant to the parents of the foreign-born students.

"... students need much better information and guidance than most now receive.... about how they can conduct important exchanges with their families about school activities, homework, and school decisions."

Joyce L. Epstein, Phi Delta Kappan, May 1995

The first thing I discovered was that in many of their cultures, parents were not expected to participate in school activities. That was always the role of the teacher, and out of respect for the educators, they stayed away.

So my first job was to inform them that we wanted them to be active in the school, and in the PTA. We wanted to see them in the class, in the school, being as supportive to the children and the school as possible.

Many didn't realize that the PTA provided so many of the programs, trips and cultural experiences for the entire student body. To my surprise, many rsponded with rapid-fire questions and eagerly jumped at the chance to become members of the PTA for the first time.

Now I have decided that my best role for the ESL program is to be in the classroom working with the students. Because of my visibility and interaction with the students, they feel comfortable with me and will go home and inform their parents that I am someone that can be trusted.

This also is a first step in the students encouraging their parents to participate just as I do. Remember, I don't know their language, but we still communicate. We are still making progress every day. If I have no fear taking this step, maybe the ESL parents will soon feel comfortable enough to join me in the classroom. A lot of parents already have taken that step and we now communicate on a regular basis.

Note: Ms. Burwell agreed to a follow-up to measure the dialogue initiated in terms of number of parent-participants.

Book review

Intercultural Marriages: Promises and Pitfalls
by Dugan Romano, Intercultural Press, 1988

Would this book have talked me out of a bicultural marriage 14 years ago? Probably yes and no. 'Yes' because the book's cautious tone and abundance of counselled cases (over 100) may be somewhat intimidating to bicultural newlyweds. But the 'yes' would have been tempered by a 'no', if only because I would have liked to think that only problem-marriages knock on the counsellor's door and that mine would not end up there *just yet*. The pitfalls may be real, but if I were a newlywed *today*, I'd like to hang onto the promises for as long as I could. It is precisely from that wishful perspective that the book is written.

The book is about *inter*cultural rather than *bi*cultural marriages and for couples who select that path, the game of marriage is indeed about *intercultural problem-solving*. That line of thought is most evident in the choice of the Venn diagram of interlocking circles to illustrate four marital models of bridging cultures. These are: submission, compromise, obliteration or consensus. There is a fifth scenario I believe, the all-of-the-above model which could be a more realistic arrangement than the others taken separately.

As a stand-alone model, we could call it 'ambivalence', suggesting the not-so comfortable ability of having to fluctuate between the four positions previously identified to fit the demands of a particular situation. While consensus may be the "ideal choice", from my own experience, it is rarely attainable to the *full* satisfaction of either intercultural partner. And we are not necessarily talking about "agreement" *between* partners either. Oftentimes, practicality takes precedence over agreement and ambivalence becomes *either* spouse's only viable stance. Many times for instance, I find myself sacrificing a personal value while affirming an opposite value by my action although I may disagree with the latter.

As an intercultural marriage partner, I have found that it is generally in the 'grey' zone of communication that people who straddle two cultures have the greatest leverage. And what's grey includes the fragile points of contact "where culture leaves off and person begins" and where, generally speaking, intercultural effectiveness is all a matter of degree, as Ms. Romano correctly suggests throughout the book.

Because of my inclination away from neat labels, I admit to feeling rather uncomfortable with the seven psychological types (p. 5-15). Which among us entered our intercultural marriage as an "outcast, rebel, maverick, compensator, adventurer, escapist or unstable"? My thought on the list's foreboding tone takes me to the author's observation on p. 15: "We have not given much space to love... Certainly,... it played a part, but *love* is defined differently by different cultures- something which many intercultural spouses have learned to their dismay only after they are married." Which, I submit, ought to make love an appropriate anchor for opening the discussion (rather than the types above). But then, I also suspect that a counsellor's opinion might be quite different on the matter.

After all, the value a culture places on love ties in with how it treats male-female roles, communication, sex, child-rearing (not to mention marriage itself). Those and other potential troublespots are discussed at length with insightful comments and practical guidelines applicable to day-to-day living. From FBPN's perspective, the section on raising children is of particular interest. The author shares that "successful intercultural parents are generally successful intercultural spouses." Quite true and how that is has become a growing concern of today's foreign-born parents. Their challenging task is to raise kids in a societal context that includes non-traditional couples, dual career marriages, greater acceptance of mixed marriages perhaps, but at the same time as well, common occurrences of ethnic- and race-based conflicts, not to mention other things that may be quite alien to their native cultures.

Much has changed since 1988 when the book was written. A second edition is due out next year and I look forward to reading it.

There are at least two ways in which parents can get help INSTANTLY!

- Through the foreign-born family interview, we address your questions on the spot and share our suggestions.
- 'Ask Us' for pointers *when* you need it. Those are shared in the section below as 'Tips for busy, working parents'.

Ask us: Tips for busy and working parents

Instead of Safeway or Giant, say 'supermarket' in your native tongue! Your child hears it often enough (after all, we all need to eat!) and will be able to say the word in no time!

Q: I have my bad days too! On those days, I don't feel like making the effort!

A: Join the crowd. There's nothing wrong about that. Turn that lousy feeling into a fun, learning opportunity. FUN, FUN, FUN is the real name of the game! Mimic your bad mood and give it a name.... in your native tongue! It has worked every time for me! Kids catch on fast and, in the process, associate something concrete (the funny face you make) with the new word that is introduced (or re-introduced for the sake of vocabulary practice).

If you should agree with the idea of a member get-together, please clip and return this form to state your preference. Or call 703 812-8716!

Yes, I'd love to meet other network members and discuss upcoming FBPN events! (If we don't hear from you, we will assume that you are *not* interested.)

Where:

___ a restaurant (private room)
___ a community room (local schools make those available for a small fee. For instance, one can be rented at my daughters' school for $67 for the evening)
___ a member's house (such as mine to start with)
___ other location? Please specify in space below.

When:
Early next year, perhaps in February (before the WUST radio program begins, tentatively, in March or April 1996)

Additional thoughts!
Please state your preference by checking yes or no.

___ Yes
___ No We'd like to make it a family-friendly gathering to accommodate those parents who have to bring their kids

___ Yes
___ No If we should opt for the community room, would members be willing to share the cost? At, say, $67, the individual cost would be minimal.

___ other thoughts? Please specify.

Our appreciation and thanks to....

FBPN members and readers for their enthusiastic support, including (at press time):

The World Bank Group Family Volunteer Services
Alexandria City Public Schools (Family and Community Involvement)
The Children's Defense Fund
Center for Applied Linguistics
Children's Express
Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning (John Hopkins University, Baltimore campus, MD)
National Foreign Language Center (John Hopkins University, Washington D.C.)
Overseas Briefing Center (State Department)

and those parents and supporters who cared to share with us that we have made a difference in their family and professional life!

Our special thanks to

Dawnn Burwell for her article in this issue!

For young readers and parents

Grandpa's Town by Takaaki Nomura, Karu/Miller Book Publishers, 1991. *Bilingual in Japanese and English.*

Can a young child learn about community bonds? The answer is 'yes' through the eyes of a grandfather! I see a need to seek out and create more instances of intergenerational learning of this type.

Check it out at Central Library in Arlington.

In our next issue

- FBPN's foreign-born family
- Two article contributors:
  - Dugan Romano, author of *Intercultural Marriages: Promises and Pitfalls*
  - Marcela Von Vacano, bilingual teacher, Arlington County Public Schools
- An expert's perspective: *Bilingualism and Bilingual Education: A Research Perspective* by Kenji Hakuta, Spring 1990(Stanford University)
- The foreign-born professionals and entrepreneurs as role models for immigrant parents and youth: strength in skills and numbers

To receive FBPN's next issue, please complete and mail this form with your check.

Name

Mailing address:

Home phone:
Work phone:
Fax:
E-mail:

Please send a copy of FBPN to my friend(s) listed below:

How did you hear about FBPN?

Please check items you would like us to call or fax you about. Thank you!

__ your country's child-rearing/parenting practices
__ being our next foreign-born family feature
__ writing an article of interest to you and our readers
__ global parenting strategies that work for you
__ your most pressing concerns
__ how your employer could help your ethnic community
__ other?

"You have identified a need, and are well qualified to fill it."
The Children's Defense Fund

The
FOREIGN-BORN
Parent
NETWORK™
March/April 1996
Issue No. 4
ISSN 1085-3596

An interactive and multicultural forum
for parent-citizens and partners in education

Alice T. Rasmussen, founder and editor

A Publication of BOND, 2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA 703 812 8716

EDITOR

Straight answers do not engage kids....

.... to expand the boundaries of their learning experiences. How my elementary age daughters learn in school has given me much food for thought.

At the 1995 fall parent-teacher conference, I voiced a concern. On the one hand, I remarked, kids are instructed to memorize words for spelling tests. But on the other hand, they are also told not to "worry" about spelling in a geography assignment. As it was explained to me, not-often-used names make kids 'freeze' rather than "do their best". I was concerned, though, that the message contained, in this instance, a glaring contradiction, one that does not engage kids to do their best, precisely!

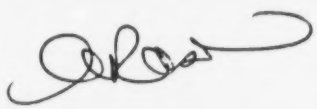
Kids (and big people too!) ought to be challenged to go the extra mile, while realizing that each one's 'best' is an *ever-rising* target. To cope with change is to demonstrate individual resourcefulness in redefining boundaries and coming up with new questions and answers. Kids need to experience that challenge too. So, my suggestion to the teacher was that a straight "Don't worry!" answer is limiting, that we would coach kids far more better with this pointer instead: "How high will your rising star take you?" Indeed, in a world that is wrenching with change, that is how most learning standards are being redefined.

Our rising star takes FBPN on the waves of New World Radio (a fitting name?) on WUST AM1120! By way of introduction and in anticipation of the multilingual program, the present issue features our editor's bilingual family (see p. 4). On the topic of bilingualism and bilingual education, the summary of Kenji Hakuta's paper (Stanford University) suggests some implications for us, eager and concerned parents (see Part I on p. 2).

Our "Tips for busy, working parents" was very well received (p. 7). It began in response to one of our members' call! We welcome your reactions as we become more visible (see p. 8). We also invite you to expand the network with home-grown ideas. How high has your rising star taken you since we last spoke?

In our networked economy, we would do well to expand the sense of community to include far-reaching global connections and world class standards of individual and professional competence (*World Class* by R. M. Kanter, 1995). Those connections might begin with the foreign-born professionals and entrepreneurs, a local community of talents (see p. 6).

In order to thrive in change, we must remain engaged and informed. FBPN is a peer foreign-born resource and a ground for cross-fertilizing ideas. The stronger the network grows with new members and ideas, the more enriched our dialogue. We welcome your friends and prospective members at our next get-together (see insert).



Editor

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(Stanford University)

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6 The foreign-born professional and entrepreneurs as role model: They have been through it!

7 **Ask Us:**
Tips for busy, working parents

8 For young readers and parents

Insert: For current and prospective members, let's meet in March!

Our mission

We are an interactive peer resource, advocate and multicultural support network for foreign-born and *all* parents whose lives are touched by the interaction between the home- and host-country cultures. We engage parents in a dialogue on how that cultural interaction affects parental involvement in second language learning, intercultural parenting, the workplace, school and community. All rights reserved.

Who we are

FBPN is an upbeat publication based on its founder's experience as a spouse in an intercultural marriage and a foreign-born parent whose personal mission has been to preserve the home culture while thriving in the host-culture and maintaining a global outlook.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) is published every two months by BOND (**B**usiness, **O**rganization and **N**etwork **D**evelopment), a global human resources consulting and training business.

What we can do for you

We offer
- parenting workshops and seminars
- consulting in multicultural community and organization development, including global human resources and leadership development, work-family and diversity strategic planning
- workshops on marketing across cultures
- multicultural advertising space.

How you can reach us

Phone and fax: 703 812-8716
E-mail: arasmus1@gmu.edu.

Membership rates

For a yearly subscription to FBPN (six issues):

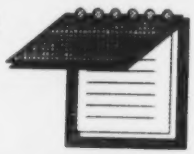
$35.00	individuals and families
$50.00	public, government and state institutions;non-profit organizations
$65.00	commercial, international, for-profit institutions and universities

We also offer
- international rates
- a 10% discount on multiple orders
- back issues at $5.00 per issue

Please send your check (payable to *The Foreign-born Parent Network*) **with the form on p. 8** to:

The Foreign-born Parent Network
2700 N. Wakefield Street
Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA

What have we been up to?



- **Saturday March 6th, 1996.** National Career Teleconference on the topic of "A second language and culture advantage". The 55 minute televised broadcast will take questions from high school students residing in states that sign up to participate in the program. Call Alice at 703 812 8716 for more details

- **Saturday March 16th, 1996.** As a member of the Education Standards Task Force, FBPN's editor will participate in an educational summit for Northern Virginia to be held on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University.

- **March 4th-April 6th, 1996.** FBPN's editor will teach a course in George Washington University's Practical Applications in Global Business. Course title: "Cultural Conflict and Cultural Empathy".

- FBPN's public service announcements in English, French, Spanish and Vietnamese are ready for taping and will be aired on WUST AM1120 between now and April. We received confirmation from WUST that the weekly radio program will air beginning in April!

Review of Research

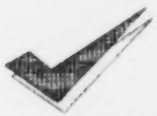
Bilingualism and Bilingual Education: A Research Perspective
by Kenji Hakuta, Occasional paper, Spring 1990

From this concise summary of research in bilingual education, our review intends to draw some initial implications for parents. Those implications are flagged with a check mark. Although it is skewed towards learners with low English proficiency, the state of current knowledge in second language learning points to definite benefits in helping kids acquire proficiency in their first language. To parents who wish to either preserve their native tongue or expose youngsters to a second language, this brief review should prove useful.

For a number of our foreign-born parents and readers, their children have acquired or are acquiring proficiency in English and are learning to speak the home language (which, in effect, becomes their second language). Hakuta reports some significant research findings about second language learning.

But first, let us define 'bilingual'. According to Hakuta's paper,

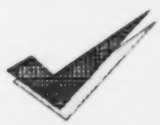
the definition most favored by experts is: "possessing minimal communicative skills in a second or foreign language.... from which a variety of bilingual skills can develop." This fairly broad definition has the merit of encouraging parents to continue to expose children to a second language. It needs to be pointed out, however, that the prevalent goal of bilingual programs in the U.S. is to ease learners' transition into English *rather than* maintain the first language (although there are a few programs that pursue the latter as an explicit goal).



1st implication

As a foreign-born parent, you are your child's ideal resource. And the sooner, the better. My ongoing strategy has been 'one parent-one language' to keep the home language alive. More on this in future issues!

It appears that as different as say, Japanese and English may be, the transfer of concepts (as related with time and space) has more to do with the learner's proficiency level in the first language than the skills that are taught in the second language.

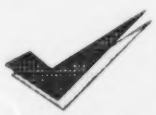


2nd implication

We can't quite say that a child has difficulty learning a second language because the first and second language may be different. But we can say that proficiency in the native language gives the child a good base for learning a second. (Dr. Hakuta's interest is in Japanese, Spanish and English).

> "... native language proficiency is a powerful predictor of the rapidity of second language development."
>
> Dr. K. Hakuta

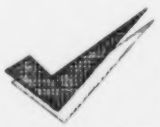
The current state of research on second language learning places the emphasis on the interrelationship between language and its many functions: thinking, writing, communication.... Of particular significance is the social context in which cognitive skills take place.



3rd implication

Our November issue (p. 4) identified the three characteristics of a learning mode as being integrative, inclusive and international (the three I's). Integration appears to be the way research on second language learning is going, as suggested by the concurrent emphasis on interdisciplinary inquiry. One practical implication that I see has to do with a question that a number of parents have raised: "When and how do I introduce reading or writing to my child"? In my experience, the strategy of integrating the various language functions has born most successful results. Those will also be the subject of upcoming issues.

Research indicates that language proficiency is far more complex than the notion of "language aptitude" would seem to suggest. Going beyong it, researchers have expanded categories of skills to include the useful distinction between 'communicative language' and 'academic language' (Cummins, 1984). Both are used in oral and written form and both are equally critical. However, 'communicative language' puts language in context while the other does not. More significantly, skills develop more rapidly in the former area.



4th implication

Language-in-context is interactive, which makes the time spent communicating with your child in your native tongue invaluable. And because context is significant in the process of acquisition, draw on your child's interests initially, and he/she will acquire your native language that much faster. (as suggested in our game plan for parents in the Jan./Feb. issue). Upcoming issues will identify ways to tap into kids' interests for maximum results.

Is there an appropriate age for learning a second language? Although it is recognized that the earlier the better, older learners have the advantage of cognitive maturity over younger learners. The learner's age may not affect his/her ability in academic functions but the acquisition of certain sound features and grammatical skills may be slower in the older learner.

5th implication

The research dispels the myth of an age-appropriate time for second language acquisition. That's the good news although the current state of research invites further exploration of the age factor and its actual significance in language learning.

We haven't quite exhausted the information contained in Hakuta's paper. Tune in to Part II in our next issue.

Note:
An effort was made to avoid the use of research jargon to make the information accessible to lay parents.

How far have I come?

An engaged and informed foreign-born is a hot connection between local and global!

Information without commitment or commitment without information is a dead end. Many of our readers share a commitment to a second language and culture. Yet, many of us also feel that information resources are either lacking or not quite relevant. My sense has been that our various experiences as foreign-born and intercultural families deserve a strong voice as we continue to grow in strength. (The fall 1993 issue of Time Magazine, reports that the number of mixed marriages has tripled since the 1970's). I see our network's role as creating change, and certainly, avenues for our needs to be expressed and our resources to be exploited, as they should be. That is something I look forward to accomplishing, with our many voices rolled into one.

Looking ahead to FBPN's get-together for current and prospective members in March, I couldn't think of a more appropriate time to come out from behind the editor's desk.

As a foreign-born with extensive years of residence in France, the United States and Asia, I was made keenly aware of the interaction between cultures and its repercussions on families. The few incidents of ethnic bias (I experienced when I was living in France) did comparatively little to solidify my thinking. What really did it was my Dad's obsessive mistrust of anything or anyone non-Asian. But, whereas trust eluded him, I bounced back with a ready supply of it.

That intergenerational experience has helped me place the human need for connection into perspective as the parent of two mixed blood daughters, Caroline and Anne (now 10 and six years old respectively), as an international consultant in human resources and organizational change, and as a spouse in an intercultural marriage.

What can children of intercultural marriages get out of their unique heritage? Proficiency in, possibly, more than one language is an inspiring goal. I also decided early on that my kids need not live with a mistrust of other cultures.

But trust is not just talk. Parents and kids must work at it, with bare hands and cold sweat, otherwise, it just won't happen. FBPN was conceived with the commitment to bond the foreign-born and model an enlightened standard of cultural solidarity.

In an age of instant information access and overdose, "sitting in front of the screen is not a substitute for human relationships. You need to look at what you're accomplishing." (*American Demographics*, Jan. 1996, p. 45)

So, what have I accomplished that has made a difference in my life and that of my children?

The long answer to these questions will take FBPN into the next century, I hope. For now, the short answer identifies 1/ information-building skill and ground rules we can equip kids with to keep them on a learning mode and 2/ the current state of my daughters' home language proficiency and their own perception of themselves.

Information-building skill and ground rules for everyday use

I have always thought that the term 'problem'

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(as in 'problem-solving) does not define the skill of inquiry nearly as well as 'information-building'. To me, a 'problem' is confining whereas information is limitless. And 'solving' suggests a reactive response whereas building is proactive and indicates a rising standard.

There are many instances when a straight answer to a child's question can, and should be, avoided. Similarly, a 'yes' or 'no' answer to a close-ended question limits the bounds of inquiry. Instead, answering a question with another question such as: "What do you think?" or "What would you say?" invites more interaction in the second language and a different way of looking at connections (depending on your child's level of maturity, knowledge and age).

To support a higher standard of inquiry, I have found two ground rules to be of particular help. Those are: Never say "I can't do it" and "I don't know." My daughters and I abide by both. And at their current level of French proficiency, we have made out pretty well, I think.

Special is being a 'hyphenated' and bilingual connection between local and global

To preserve the home language, I have applied the 'one parent-one language' strategy with measurable results. (My American husband only speaks English in the home). In sharing our accomplishment as a bilingual family, I'd like to add that no parent is truly an expert (I too, have a learning curve) and that we are partners in learning as we strive to give our children the roots and variety of experiences that are called for in the networked economy.

Both my girls have always felt *and* been made to feel special about their bilingual ability. I tell them, strangers and friends tell them. (Certainly, I would not wish any child with a foreign-born family background to feel otherwise).

At 10, Caroline speaks and reads books in French. As an indication of her functional ability level, she has been reading the French translation of Enid Blyton and Caroline Quine's popular young detective series over the last year or so. I was amazed that she seemed to enjoy l'Esprit de Famille, an easy-to-read novel by Janine Boissard (edition Sayard, 1977) this past summer. Caroline began to write in French last year. As for Anne, her speaking ability level is more functional than either her reading or writing at this time.

In my view, a combination of factors may account for these encouraging results. Among them are:

- Reading turns us on! The ritual of daily 'quiet time' (for reading with me or alone) has always been a *top* priority in our family;
- both girls became proficient readers of English before they entered first grade (both began to read 2nd grade material early into the first grade);
- the integration of speaking, writing and reading has been ongoing;
- the flexibility of part-time work (first, as an employee and now, as an independent) without which it would have been harder to reconcile the demands of career and parenting;
- French and English have a fairly similar alphabet, which has made the transition easier.

And

- last, but not least, my personal and informed commitment (as summed up in the three C's). Incidentally, this list is far from exhaustive.

Are we connecting?

"Each hour one spends in front of the tube is linked, statistically speaking, to reduced trust and social engagement. By contrast, each hour spent reading a newspaper is associated with greater trust and engagement."

Robert D. Putnam
Director of the Center for International Affairs,
Harvard University
Author of an essay entitled Tuning In, Tuning Out

In sum, children born of interethnic and intercultural marriages have a unique background. As a parent of two, I do not totally subscribe to the notion of acculturation (i.e. adoption of a dominant culture and 'loss' of the primary culture and language). To me, their biological 'mix' is what makes them special, precisely. And it is a special-ness that I would always encourage them to preserve as they make sense of their own self-identity.

For the first time, last fall, Caroline asked me about her cultural roots. I see that as a sign of her maturing judgment. At six, Anne has shown neither interest nor concern. Caroline's questions were: "Am I French?" And, "If I am French, how come your hair is black?" (actually, it is prematurely gray!). I responded with: "How come I speak English without being fair skinned?" The point was that our special abilities are not always apparent to the eye. I explained that, more important even is how she sees herself fitting in and how that could augment her unique ability to connect with people.

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We brought in the distinction in French between 'langue de culture' (or adopted language, if you will) and 'langue maternelle' (or native tongue). For me, the latter is Vietnamese and I have been introducing various aspects of that culture to Caroline and Anne as well, i.e. the romanized script, the sounds of the language, its food. Anne listened in intently during the conversation. Some time later, we attended an international event at a local school in Maryland. My name tag read: Vietnam-France-U.S. And so did my girls'. The three of us understand our special bond.

It may be that as they grow older, this image of themselves may change. For now, they feel totally comfortable, just as I do, with their 'hyphenated' identity. And you know what? The concept itself has a built-in equalizer. When the component cultures are united by dashes in between, the artificial division between 'majority' and "minority' becomes insignificant.

Strengths in skills and numbers

The foreign-born entrepreneurs: They have been through it!

A role model inspires by deed rather than word. Last fall, my oldest daughter, a 4th grader, started a lawn-raking business and brought in a friend and 5th grader as partner. Together, they (literally) raked in 20 dollars. There are two sides to this family vignette. Here is one side. As she explained it, her entrepreneurial stint was inspired by my own experience. I was bursting with pride, yet, and here is the other side, also cautioned Caroline and Sibley that as a professional 'business', they had to complete each raking job as professionals with an eagle eye on pleasing their customers.

With that as a backdrop, I would also like to suggest that community service-providers serving large populations of immigrants turn to where the resources are, the foreign-born professionals who have been through it!

In my work as an international human resources consultant and trainer, two questions have come to the forefront. They are: representation and perception of foreign-born's professionals. So, here is some food for thought.

The 1987 Characteristics of Business Owners Survey[1] (see table on p.7) shows good news on the question of foreign-born representation:

- Although most of the firms surveyed have receipts ranging only between $5,000 and $100,000,[2]
- the great majority are entrepreneurs, that is, have no paid employees;[3]
- and the great majority are also married (and we presume, some have children);
- of the women- and non-minority male-owned businesses, about 11% (in each category) indicate they are foreign-born;
- of the black-owned businesses, about 15% report they were not born in the United States.

Our readers may be interested to know that in the international management circle, the unspoken perception of the non-English native is their lack of professionalism. How is that? We invite your comments.

As a skilled resource, foreign-born talents may be more readily exploited in the research field, academic and private sector. (This has caused its own set of problems as far as immigration policy is concerned.)

But we have yet to find strategic and far-reaching ways to utilize foreign-born talent as part of a community's integrated solutions in a network of resources that connect the local and the global.

In making a step in that direction, FBPN mainstreams an image of the world-class foreign-born, one that adds value in terms of the language, culture and professional advantage.

About role modeling

"(Researchers) found a profound disconnect between what Americans say they believe and how they behave-a kind of belief-behavior gap. One explanation for the gap is that in the United States people learn values from what their parents and grandparents say-not from what their elders do."

U.S. generational study by Louis Harris and Associates for the International Longevity Center, New York as reported in the *Washington Post* (Health, Oct. 31st, 1995)

1. The most recent data available from the Agriculture & Financial Statistics Division, Bureau of the Census.
2. All industry sectors are represented, in particular, retail and 'selected services', meaning, legal, education, auto repair, social services...
3. Entrepreneurs *under* 25 and 65 and over were included in the survey (the prime working age is between 25 and 64).

Your comments and feedback identify *your* needs and define *our* interactive and resource network

"I really like your tips for busy, working parents."
Liz Gustafson, Arlington, VA

"I am not much of a strategist. When I make a decision, I move head on. Your newsletter is helping me fill a skill gap."
Isabelle Pollacco, Washington, D.C.

Bailey's Elementary School, Falls Church (a magnet school with a Spanish Immersion program) requested a Spanish and Vietnamese version of FBPN. Thank you for your request! So, beginning with the March issue, FBPN will be published in Spanish. Back issues too will be available in Spanish.

Note for our readers

Author Dugan Romano has been out of town. Her article will appear in the next issue.

The January/February issue incorrectly stated that a new edition of her 1988 book is due out next year. It is actually expected to come out this year. We apologize for the error.

Marcela Von Vacano's article was not available at press time. We also apologize for any inconvenience.

Get help INSTANTLY!

- Through the foreign-born family interview, we address your questions **on the spot** and share our suggestions.
- 'Ask Us' for pointers *when* you need it. Those are shared in the section below as 'Tips for busy, working parents'.

ASK US: Tips for busy, working parents

I have always piqued my daughters' interest by saying that our cat, Schubert, is bilingual because he understands what I say in French and what my husband tells him in English. From there, it was easy to stretch it a bit by putting French words into Schubert' mouth. The family pet is a perfect ally! And a great role-model too!

Should you go out and get a pet? I'd say yes. And, if you already have one, start talking with the pet canary, dog, frog or hamster in your native language! Your kid(s) will get a kick out of it!

What has worked for you and your kids? Call us at 703 812 8716 and share *your* tips with our readers!

The foreign-born entrepreneurs and business-owners: some statistics

	Hispanic-owned businesses	Black-owned businesses	Other minority-owned businesses	Women-owned businesses	Nonminority male-owned businesses
Total firms 14,093,288	422,373	424,165	376,711	4,114,787	8,755,252
Receipts between $5,000 and $100,000	89%	93%	81%	92%	79%
with no paid employees	80%	83%	74%	85%	69%
Married as of 12/31/87	75.9%	66.6%	77.1%	70.3%	80%
Owner was born outside the U.S.	44.9%	14.7%	66.2%	11.4%	11.1%

We are being written up about in....

The Children's Post, Fairfax, VA, September 1995
Asian Fortune, Fairfax, VA, October 1995
The Northern Virginia Sun Weekly, Arlington, VA, October 26th, 1995
Association of American Foreign Service Women News, Washington DC, February 1996
Parent Weekly, January 31st 1996
Parenting Resource Guide, Arlington County, 1996 update

and.....

Smart Kids, Miami, Florida, April 1996
State Department Magazine, April/May 1996

We also

- authored an article for the Foreign Service Youth Foundation, 1994 on "How to Raise Bilingual/ Bicultural Children in the Home"
- are a member of *Working Mother*'s reader panel since January 1996

For young readers and parents

Papa Petit, Papa Small by Lois Lenski, Henry Z. Walck, New York, 1963. *Bilingual in French and English.*

The book may have little visual appeal but parents could use some help (I'm sure) when it comes to introducing 'house chores' to children. Enjoy reading it (in both languages) even if your child/ren may not be ready to take on their share of responsibility around the house.

Available in the Children's Room, Central Library in Arlington.

In our next issue

- FBPN's foreign-born family
- An article by Dugan Romano, author of *Intercultural Marriages: Promises and Pitfalls*, 1988
- FBPN's latest connection: One inclusive local solution in a network of resources
- **Review (Part II):** *Bilingualism and bilingual education: A Research Perspective* by K. Hakuta, Spring 1990, (Standford University). More practical implications for parents

To receive FBPN's next issue, please complete and mail this form with your check.

How did you hear about FBPN?

Name

Mailing address:

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Fax:
E-mail:

Please send a copy of FBPN to my friend(s) listed below:

Please check items you would like us to call or fax you about. Thank you!

__ your country's child-rearing/parenting practices
__ being our next foreign-born family feature
__ writing an article of interest to you and our readers
__ global parenting strategies that work for you
__ your most pressing concerns
__ how your employer could help your ethnic community
__ other?

"80 percent of the children in the Third World grow up learning two or more languages."
The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning (Fall 1995)

Red
de PADRES
Extranjeros
DE NACIMIENTO™
Marzo/Abril de 1996
Une publicación multilingüe
de BOND #4

Un foro multicultural e interactivo para
padres ciudadanos y compañeros en la educación

Alice T. Rasmussen, fundadora y editora

2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 E.U. ISSN 1085-3596 703 812 8716

EDITOR

Respuestas directas no comprometen a los jóvenes...

... para que expandan los límites de sus experiencias de aprendizaje. La manera cómo mis hijas aprenden en la escuela primaria me ha dado mucho para pensar.

Durante la conferencia de padres y maestros de 1995 expresé mi preocupación. Por un lado, dije, a los niños se les dice de memorizar palabras para las pruebas de ortografía. Pero, por otro lado, se les dice que no se "preocupen" de la ortografía al hacer un deber de geografía. Como se me explicara, las palabras poco usuales hacen que los niños se "congelen" ("freeze") en vez de dar lo mejor que puedan. Esto me preocupó pues creo que el mensaje encierra, en este caso, una flagrante contradicción, que precisamente incita a los niños a no dar lo mejor de sí.

A los niños (y también a la gente mayor) se le debe desafiar para que realice todo lo que puede, comprendiendo que lo "mejor" de uno es un objectivo siempre en progresión. Para salir adelante con el cambio, es necesario demostrar su habilidad individual al redefinir límites y producir nuevas preguntas y respuestas. Los niños también necesitan experimentar este desafío. Por lo tanto mi sugerencia a la maestra fue que una respuesta directa "¡No te preocupes!" restringe los límites mientras que sería mucho mejor si les dijéramos: "¿Cuán alto puede llevarte tu estrella naciente?" En verdad, en un mundo donde el cambio es rampante, esa es la forma de redefinir los estándares de aprendizaje.

Nuestra estrella naciente lleva FBPN a las ondas de "New World Radio" (Radio del Nuevo Mundo)- ¿un nombre adecuado?- en WUST AM1120. Como introducción y anticipando el programa de lenguajes múltiples, este ejemplar tiene un artículo sobre la familia bilingüe de nuestro editor (véase pág. 4). Sobre el tema de bilingualismo y educación bilingüe, el resumen del estudio de Kenji Hakuta (Universidad de Stanford) se refiere a oportunidades para nosotros, padres ansiosos y preocupados (véase Parte I en pág. 3).

Nuestras "Sugerencias para padres ocupados" fueron bien recibidas (pág. 7). ¡Comenzó como respuesta al llamado de uno de nuestros socios! Sus reacciones son bienvenidas ya que nos hacemos más visibles localmente (véase pág. 8). Asímismo le invitamos a expandir la red con ideas que se le ocurra en el hogar. ¿Cuán alto lo ha llevado su estrella naciente desde que hablamos últimamente?

EN ESTE NUMERO

2 • ¿A qué nos hemos dedicado?
• **Reseña (Parte I)**: *Bilingualismo y Educación Bilingüe: Una Perspectiva de Investigación por* Kenji Hakuta, primavera 1990 (Universidad de Stanford)

4 **Nuestra familia**: El extranjero de nacimiento es una conección entre lo local y lo global

6 Los empresarios nacidos en el extranjero: ¡Ellos lo han pasado!

7 **Pregúntenos:** Sugerencias para padres trabajadores y ocupados

8 Para lectores jóvenes y padres

Inserción: Para socios actuales y futuros: ¡Nos vemos en marzo!

En nuestra economía de red, haríamos muy bien en expandir el sentido de comunidad para incluir conecciones globales de largo alcance y estándares mundiales de competencia profesional e individual (*World Class* por R. M. Kanter, 1995). Esas conecciones podrían comenzar con los empresarios y profesionales nacidos en el extranjero, una comunidad de talentos local (véase pág. 6).

Para poder prosperar en el cambio, debemos mantenernos comprometidos e informados. FBPN es un recurso del nacido en el extranjero y terreno propicio para fertilización de ideas. A medida que la red crezca con nuevos asociados e ideas, más rico será nuestro diálogo. Le daremos la bienvenida a nuestros amigos y asociados en gérmen en nuestra próxima reunión (véase la inserción).

Editora

Nuestra misión

Somos una red de apoyo y defensa multicultural, interactiva y con recursos de nuestros pares dedicada a padres nacidos en el extranjero y a *todos* cuyas vidas están marcadas por la interacción entre la cultura del país de origen y aquella donde residen. Comprometemos a los padres para dialogar sobre cómo esta interracción cultural afecta el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma, el hecho de venir de diferentes culturas el cual marca el compromiso de los padres, el lugar de trabajo, la escuela y la comunidad. Derechos de autor 1995 de FBPN "The Foreign-born Parent Network" (Red de Padres Extranjeros de Nacimiento) en cualquier forma, o en cualquier país o idioma que sea.

¿Quiénes somos?

FBPN es una publicación optimista basada en la experiencia de su fundadora como esposa en un matrimonio intercultural y madre nacida en el extranjero cuya misión personal ha sido la preservación de la cultura nativa al mismo tiempo que prosperaba en la cultura del país de residencia, manteniendo una visión global.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) es publicada cada dos meses por BOND "Business, Organization and Network Development" (Desarrollo de la Organización, Negocios y de la Red), un negocio de capacitación y consultoría en recursos humanos globales.

¿Qué podemos hacer por usted?

Ofrecemos
- seminarios y talleres para padres
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- talleres en técnicas de venta a través de diferentes culturas
- espacio para publicidad multicultural

¿Cómo puede contactarnos?

Teléfono y fax: 703 812-8716
E-mail (correo electrónico): arasmus1@gmu.edu.

Cuota de socio

Para una subscripción de un año a FBPN (seis ejemplares):

$35,00	individual o familias
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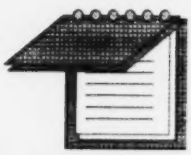
- ediciones anteriores a $5,00 cada uno

Favor enviar su cheque (pagadero en dólares a *The Foreign-born Parent Network*) **con el formulario de página 8 a:**

The Foreign-born Parent Network
2700 N. Wakefield Street
Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA

¿A qué nos hemos dedicado?



- **Sábado, 6 de marzo de 1996.** Conferencia televisada sobre Orientación Profesional Nacional, cuyo tópico es "Un segundo idioma y ventaja cultural". Esta emisión televisada de 55 minutos presentará preguntas de estudiantes de secundaria que residen en estados que se han registrado para participar en el programa. Llamar a Alice al 703 812 8716 para más detalles.

- **Sábado, 16 de marzo de 1996.** Como miembro del "Education Standards Task Force" (Agrupación de Trabajo para Estándares Educativos), la editora del FBPN participará en una cumbre educativa en "Northern Virginia" que se llevará a cabo en la Universidad George Mason en Fairfax.

- **4 de marzo-6 de abril de 1996.** La editora del FBPN dictará un curso para el programa "Practical Applications in Global Business" (Aplicaciones Prácticas en Negocios Globales) en la Universidad George Washington.

- Anuncios de servicio público de FBPN en inglés, francés, español y vietnamita están prontos para ser grabados y se emitirán por WUST AM1120 entre ahora y abril. Hemos recibido confirmación de WUST que en abril comenzará un programa radial semanal.

Reseña de Investigación

Bilingualismo y Educación Bilingüe: Una Perspectiva de Investigación por Kenji Hakuta, escrito ocasional, primavera de 1990

De este resumen conciso de investigación en educación bilingüe, nuestra reseña pretende extraer algunas implicaciones iniciales para padres. Estas implicaciones están señaladas por marcas. A pesar que se inclina hacia los estudiantes con bajo conocimiento en inglés, el estado del conocimiento actual en el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma indica que es definitivamente beneficioso el ayudar a los niños para que aprendan bien el idioma nativo. Esta breve reseña será de utilidad para aquellos padres que deseen, o bien preservar el idioma nativo, o bien exponer a los jóvenes a un segundo idioma.

Para un número de padres y lectores nacidos en el extranjero, sus niños ya saben bien o están aprendiendo inglés y aprendiendo hablar el idioma del hogar (que, en este caso, deviene su segundo idioma). Hakuta informa sobre descubrimientos de investigación significativos acerca del aprendizaje de un segundo idioma.

Pero primero, definamos el término "bilingüe". De acuerdo con el escrito de Hakuta, la definición preferida por expertos es "tener habilidades mínimas para comunicarse en un segundo

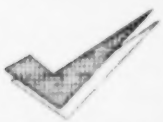
idioma o idioma extranjero... las que pueden desarrollarse en una variedad de habilidades bilingües". Esta definición relativamente amplia tiene el mérito de alentar a los padres a que expongan a sus hijos a un segundo idioma. Es necesario señalar, sin embargo, que el principal objetivo de los programas bilingües en los Estados Unidos es el de facilitar la transición de los estudiantes al inglés, *más que* mantener el idioma nativo (a pesar de que algunos programas persiguen este último propósito como objetivo explícito).

1ra consecuencia

Siendo un padre nacido en el extranjero usted constituye un recurso ideal para su hijo. Y lo antes posible, mejor. Mi actual estrategia ha sido "un idioma de un padre" para mantener vivo el idioma en el hogar.¡Más sobre este tema en ejemplares futuros!

Pareciera que aún cuando, digamos, el idioma japonés difiere del inglés, la transferencia de conceptos (en relaciones temporales y espaciales) tiene que ver más con el nivel de conocimiento del idioma nativo que con las habilidades que se enseña.

No podemos decir que un niño tiene dificultades para aprender un segundo idioma a raiz de la falta de similitud entre los dos idiomas. Pero se puede decir que el conocimiento del idioma nativo es una ventaja en el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma. (El interés particular del Dr. Hakuta ha sido los idiomas japonés, español e inglés).



2da consecuencia

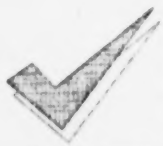
> "... la competencia en el idioma nativo es un pronosticador de la rapidez del desarrollo de un segundo idioma."
>
> Dr. K. Hakuta

El estado actual de investigación del aprendizaje de un segundo idioma pone énfasis en la interrelación entre el idioma y sus varias funciones: pensar, escribir, comunicar. El entorno social en el cual las habilidades cognitivas tienen lugar es de particular significación.

3ra consecuencia

En nuestra edición de noviembre (pág. 4) se identificaban tres características del modo de aprendizaje como siendo integradora, inclusiva e internacional (las tres I). La integración pareciera constituir el concepto hacia el cual se inclina la investigación de un segundo idioma, según sugiere el énfasis paralelo puesto en la investigación interdisciplinaria. La consecuencia práctica que veo tiene que ver con una pregunta que un número de padres han formulado: "¿Cuándo y cómo inicio my hijo en la lectura o la escritura?" En mi experiencia, la estrategia para integrar las diferentes funciones del idioma es la que más resultado ha logrado. Esto también será tema de próximas publicaciones.

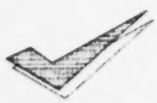
La investigación indica que la capacidad linguística es mucho más compleja la noción de "aptitud linguística" sugeriría. Más allá de esto, los investigadores han expandido las categorías de habilidades para incluir la útil diferencia entre "lenguaje comunicativo" y "lenguaje académico" (Cummins, 1984). Ambos se usan en forma oral y escrita y ambos son igualmente críticos. Sin embargo, "lenguaje comunicativo" ubica el lenguaje en un contexto mientras que el otro no lo hace. De más significación aún, las habilidades se desarrollan más rápidamente en la primer área.



4ta consecuencia

El lenguaje en un contexto es interactivo, lo que convierte en invaluable el tiempo incurrido en comunicarse con su hijo en el idioma nativo. Y debido a que el contexto es significativo en el proceso de adquisición, recurra inicialmente a los intereses de su hijo y él/ella adquirirá su idioma nativo mucho más rápidamente (como se sugería en nuestro planeamiento de juego para padres de la edición de enero/febrero). En futuros números se identificarán medios para recurrir a los intereses de los niños a fin de obtener máximos resultados.

¿Hay una edad apropiada para aprender un segundo idioma? A pesar de que se reconoce que cuanto más temprana una edad es mejor, estudiantes mayores tienen la ventaja sobre estudiantes menores de una mayor madurez cognitiva. La edad del estudiante puede no afectar sus habilidades en funciones académicas pero puede hacer más lenta la adquisición de ciertas características de sonidos, así como de estructuras gramaticales.



5ta consecuencia

La investigación desmiente el mito de que existe un tiempo apropiado de edad para la adquisición de un segundo idioma. Esta es una buena noticia, sin embargo el estado actual de la investigación invita a seguir explorando el factor edad y su significación actual en el aprendizaje de idiomas.

No hemos agotado por completo la información contenida en el escrito de Hakuta. Vea la Segunda Parte en el próximo número.

Note:
Hemos procurado no utilizar el lenguaje técnico de investigación para llevar la información al alcance de todo el mundo.

¿Hasta dónde he llegado?

¡Una persona nacida en el extranjero comprometida e informada es una conección importante entre lo local y global!

La información sin un compromiso o el compromiso sin información es un callejón sin salida. Muchos de nuestros lectores comparten un compromiso hacia un segundo idioma y cultura. Sin embargo, muchos de nosotros creemos que faltan recursos de información o que no son relevantes. Pienso que de acuerdo con nuestras variadas experiencias como familias nacidas en el extranjero o interculturales, merecemos una voz fuerte mientras continuamos fortaleciéndonos. (El ejemplar de otoño de 1993 del Time Magazine publica que la cantidad de matrimonios mixtos se ha triplicado desde 1970). Creo que el rol de nuestra red es crear cambio y ciertamente una avenida para que nuestras necesidades sean expresadas y nuestros recursos explotados, come debería ser. Eso es algo que espero alcanzar con nuestras muchas voces unidas en una.

Con miras en la reunión de marzo de FBPN para los actuales y futuros socios, creo que ahora es el mejor momento para salir de detrás del escritorio de editora.

Como alguien nacido en el extranjero que ha vivido largos años en Francia, los Estados Unidos y Asia he tenido plena conciencia de la interacción entre culturas y su repercusión en las familias. Los pocos incidentes de conflicto étnico (que experimenté cuando vivía en Francia) tuvo comparativamente poca incidencia en la solidificación de mis ideas. Lo que realmente tuvo influencia fue la desconfianza obsesiva de mi padre por todo o todos los que no fueran asiáticos. Pero así como la confianza no era su fuerte, en mí se brindó con abundancia.

Esta experiencia entre generaciones me ha ayudado a colocar la necesidad humana de conección en perspectiva como madre de dos hijas de matrimonio mixto, Caroline y Anne (ahora de 10 y seis años, respectivamente), como consultora internacional en recursos humanos y cambio en organizaciones, y como esposa en un matrimonio intercultural.

¿Qué pueden obtener los hijos de matrimonios interculturales de esta herencia única? Un objetivo inspirador sería, posiblemente, capacidad para más de un idioma. También dedidí desde el principio que mis hijas no tenían necesidad de vivir con desconfianza de otras culturas.

Pero la confianza no es solamente hablar. Los padres como los hijos deben trabajar para ello con sus propias manos y sudor, de otra manera, no se producirá. FBPN fue concebido con el compromiso de unir aquellos nacidos en el extranjero y modelar un estándar ilustrado de solidaridad cultural.

En una época de acceso instantáneo a la información y sobredosis, "el sentarse frente a la pantalla no es sustituto de las relaciones humanas. Usted tiene necesidad de mirar a lo que está logrado." (*American Demorgraphics*, enero de 1996, pág. 45).

Entonces, ¿qué es lo que logré que ha significado una diferencia en mi vida y la de mis hijas?

La respuesta completa a esta pregunta llevará a FBPN hasta el siglo venidero, espero. Por ahora, la respuesta breve identifica 1/ la capacidad que podemos equipar a nuestros hijos para edificar información y dos reglas de base para mantenerlos en un modo de aprendizaje y 2/ el estado actual de competencia linguística de mis hijas y la propia percepción de sí mismas.

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Capacidad para edificar información y reglas de base para uso diario

Siempre pensé que la palabra "problema" (como en solucionar problemas) no define la capacidad de inquisición como el de "edificación de información". Para mí un "problema" limita mientras que información es ilimitada. Y "solucionar" sugiere una respuesta de reacción mientras que edificar es activo e indica un estándar creciente.

Hay muchos casos en que una respuesta directa a la pregunta de un niño puede, y debe, evitarse. En forma similar, una respuesta de "sí" o "no" a una pregunta confina los límites de la inquisición. En cambio, respondiendo a una pregunta con otra, como por ejemplo: "¿Qué piensas?" o "¿Qué dices tú?" invita a una interacción mayor en el segundo idioma y a ver las conecciones de diferente forma (dependiendo del nivel de madurez de su hijo, conocimientos y edad)

Para favorecer un más alto nivel inquisitivo encontré que dos reglas de base son de particular ayuda. Estas son: Nunca diga "No puedo hacerlo." ni "Yo no se." Mis hijas y yo seguimos estas reglas. Y al nivel actual de conocimientos en francés que tienen, creo que nos ha ido muy bien.

¡El ser especial significa un guión de conección entre lo local y lo global!

Para preservar el lenguaje del hogar he aplicado la estrategia de "un lenguaje de un padre" con resultados positivos. (Mi esposo americano sólo habla inglés en casa). Al compartir nuestros logros como familia bilingüe, me gustaría añadir que ningún padre es verdaderamente un experto (yo también tengo una curva de aprendizaje) y somos compañeros en el aprendizaje al intentar dar a nuestros hijos las raíces y variedad de experiencias que se necesitan en la red de la economía.

Mis dos hijas se sienten y las hemos hecho sentir, especiales, con respecto a sus habilidades linguísticas. Yo se los digo, y amigos y extraños se los dicen. (Por cierto que no deseo que ningún niño con una familia de origen extranjera se sienta de otra manera).

Caroline, con 10 años, habla y lee libros en francés. Como una señal de su nivel de habilidad funcional, ella ha estado leyendo las ediciones en francés de libros de misterio para jóvenes desde el año pasado. Me extrañó el hecho de que, este verano, parecía estar disfrutando la lectura de *L'Esprit de Famille* (El Sentido Familial), una novela de fácil lectura de Janine Boissard (edición Sayard, 1977). Caroline comenzó a escribir en francés el año pasado. En cuanto a Anne, su nivel de habilidad para hablar es más funcional que su nivel para leer o escribir, en este momento.

En my opinión, una combinación de factores hacen que se logren estos resultados satisfactorios. Entre ellos podemos citar:

- ¡La lectura nos entusiasma! El ritual de tener un "momento de tranquilidad" diariamente (para leer conmigo or sola) siempre ha sido prioridad en nuestra familia;
- Ambas niñas supieron leer en inglés antes de entrar a primer grado (ambas comenzaron a leer lecturas de segundo grado al comienzo del primer grado);
- Siempre ha tenido lugar la integración de hablar, escribir y leer;
- El hecho de tener un trabajo de tiempo parcial (primero como empleada y ahora con negocio independiente en casa), sin lo cual hubiera sido muy difícil llevar a cabo carrera y maternidad;
- Tanto el francés como el inglés tienen un alfabeto similar, lo que facilitó la transición.
- Y, finalmente, pero no por eso menos importante, mi compromiso personal e informado (resumido en términos de las tres C en la edición de noviembre/diciembre). Incidentalmente, esta lista dista de ser exhaustiva.

¿Nos conectamos?

"Cada hora que pasamos enfrente del tubo está ligada, hablando estadísticamente, a reducir el compromiso social y de confianza mutua. En contraste, cada hora que se pasa leyendo un periódico está asociada con un mayor compromiso y confianza mutua."

Robert D. Putnam
Director del Centro de Asuntos Internacionales
Universidad de Harvard
Autor de un ensayo titulado Tuning In, Tuning Out (Sintonizando, saliendo de sintonía)

Resumiendo, los niños que vienen de matrimonios interétnicos e interculturales tienen antecedentes únicos. Como madre de dos hijas no suscribo totalmente a la noción de "aculturación" (es decir, adopción de una cultura dominante y 'pérdida' de la cultural primaria y de su lenguaje). Mi opinión es que esta "mezcla" biológica es lo que las hace especiales, precisamente. Y es una cualidad que voy siempre a estimular hasta que encuentren su propia identidad.

Por primera vez, este otoño pasado, Caroline me preguntó sobre sus raíces culturales. Veo esto como una señal de su madurez de juicio. Anne, con seis años, no muestra ni interés ni preocupación. Las preguntas de Carolina fueron "¿Soy francesa?" Y, "¿si soy francesa, por qué tu cabello es negro?" (¡En realidad es canoso prematuro!). Le respondí "¿Cómo es que hablo inglés y no tengo la piel clara?". El punto es que nuestras habilidades especiales no siempre son aparentes a simple vista. Le expliqué que lo más importante es cómo ella se ve en el ambiente y cómo eso

podía aumentar su habilidad única para conectarse con la gente.

Recordamos la distinción en francés entre "langue de culture" (o lenguaje adoptado, si se quiere) y "langue maternelle" (o lenguaje nativo). Para mí, lo último es el vietnamita y he estado presentando varios aspectos de esa cultura también, por ejemplo, escritura romanizada, los sonidos del lenguaje, la comida. Anne escuchaba con interés la conversación. Algún tiempo después, asistimos a un evento internacional en una escuala local de Maryland. Mi nombre en la etiqueta leía: Vietnam-Francia-Estados Unidos. Y lo mismo se leía en las de mis hijas. Las tres nos sentimos unidas por un lazo especial.

Puede ser que al crecer esta imagen que tienen de ellas mismas cambie. Por ahora, ellas se sienten totalmente cómodas, lo mismo que yo, acerca de su identidad "unida por un guión". Y saben ustedes, el concepto mismo en sí lleva un igualador. Cuando las culturas que la componen están unidas entre ellas, la división artificial entre "mayoría" y "minoría" se convierte en insignificante.

Fortaleza en habilidades y números

Los empresarios nacidos en el extranjero: ¡Ellos lo han pasado!

Un modelo de rol inspira con la acción más que con la palabra. El otoño pasado, mi hija mayor, que va a cuarto grado, comenzó un negocio cuidando céspedes y trajo a una amiga de quinto grado como socio. Juntas hicieron $20,00. Hay dos caras en este cuadro de familia. Una es que, según mi hija lo explicara, ella se inspiró de mi ejemplo. Esto me llenó de orgullo y he aquí la otra cara del cuadro, también les advertí a Caroline y a Sibley que al ser un negocio "profesional" tenían que completar cada trabajo como profesionales mirando con ojos de águila para que el cliente quedara satisfecho.

Con esto como antecedente, me gustaría también sugerir que quienes proveen servicios a la comunidad que comprende una gran población de inmigrantes recurren donde se encuentra los recursos, los profesionales nacidos en el extranjero quienes han vivido la experiencia.

En mi trabajo como consultora de recursos humanos internacionales e instructora, se me han presentado dos preguntas: representación y percepción de los profesionales nacidos en el extranjero. A continuación presento algunas ideas para meditar.

El Estudio de las Características de los Propietarios de Negocios de 1987[1] (véase el cuadro de la página 8) presenta buenas noticias acerca de la representación de quienes nacieron en el extranjero:

- A pesar de que la mayoría de las firmas investigadas tienen ingresos entre $5.000 y $100.000,[2]
- la gran mayoría son empresarios, es decir, no tienen empleados que pagar;[3]
- y la gran mayoría son asímismo casados (y podemos suponer algunos tienen hijos);
- de los negocios poseídos por mujeres y por hombres que *no* son de la minoría, alrededor del 11% (en cada categoría) dicen que son nacidos en el extranjero;
- de los negocios poseídos por negros, alrededor del 15% informan que no han nacido en los Estados Unidos.

Nuestros lectores estarán interesados en saber que en el círculo gerencial internacional, la percepción no expresada del profesional cuyo idioma nativo no es inglés es que no cuenta con gran profesionalismo. ¿Cómo puede ser? Invitamos sus comentarios.

Como recurso con habilidades, los talentos nacidos en el extranjero son explotados más facilmente en el campo de la investigación, en el sector académico y privado. (Esto ha causado sus propios problemas relacionados con la política de inmigración).

Todavía tenemos que descubrir medios estratégicos y de largo alcance para utilizar talentos nacidos en el extranjero que sean una solución integrada de la comunidad dentro de una red de recursos que conecte lo local con lo global.

En un paso hacia esta dirección, FBPN fragua y lleva a la atención de la mayoría una imagen de la persona nacida en el extranjero de clase mundial, alguien que aumenta el valor en términos de ventajas en el lenguaje, la cultura y el profesionalismo.

Sobre modelo de rol

"(Investigadores) encontraron que existe una brecha entre lo que los Americanos dicen creer y cómo se comportan-une forma de brecha entre el comportamiento y la creencia. Una explicación acerca de esta brecha es que en los Estados Unidos la gente aprende sus valores de lo que sus padres y abuelos dicen-no de lo que sus mayores hacen."

Estudio de generación en los E.U. por Louis Harris y Asociados y el Centro Internacional de la Longevidad, New York según se publicó en el *Washington Post (Salud*, 31 de Octubre de 1995)

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Sus comentarios identifican *sus* necesidades y definen *nuestra* red interactiva de recursos

"Realmente me gusta leer sus consejos referidos a padres que trabajan y están muy ocupados."
Liz Gustafson, Arlington, VA

"No soy buena para estrategias. Cuando tomo una decisión la llevo adelante decididamente. Su boletín me ayuda a llenar el espacio faltante."
Isabelle Pollacco, Washington, D.C.

La escuela elementaria de Bailey en Falls Church (que tiene un programa "imán" de inmersión en español) pidió ediciones en español y vietnamita. ¡Gracias a la PTA de Bailey! Entonces, con el número de marzo/abril, publicamos FBPN en inglés y español. Ediciones anteriores serán disponibles en español también.

Nota para nuestros lectores

La escritora Dugan Romano ha estado fuera de la ciudad. Su artículo aparecerá en el próximo número.

En el ejemplar de enero/febrero se dijo equivocadamente que una nueva edición de su libro de 1988 aparecerá el próximo año. En realidad aparecerá este año. Nuestras disculpas por el error.

El artículo de Marcela Von Vacano no estaba pronto al momento de esta impresión. También nos disculpamos por cualquier inconveniente en este sentido.

¡Obtenga ayuda en forma instantánea!

- Por intermedio de entrevistas de familias nacidas en el extranjero contestamos sus preguntas **en el momento** y compartimos nuestras sugerencias.
- 'Pregúntenos' por sugerencias *cuando* nos necesite. Estas sugerencias son compartidas en la sección que sigue.

PREGUNTENOS: Para padres trabajadores y ocupados

Siempre he despertado el interés de mis hijas diciendo que nuestro gato, Schubert, es bilingüe ya que entiende lo que digo en francés y lo que mi esposo le dice en inglés. De ahí pasé a poner palabras en francés en boca de mi gato. ¡Nuestra mascota es el aliado perfecto. Y también un modelo de rol!

¿Qué le parece si tiene una mascota? Yo diría sí. Y si ya tiene una, comience a hablarle en su lenguaje nativo, ya sea al canario, al perro, a la rana, o al hamster. ¡Sus hijos lo disfrutarán!

¿Qué es lo que funciona para usted y sus hijos? ¡Llámenos al 703 812 8716 y comparte sus sugerencias con nuestros lectores!

Algunas estadísticas sobre los empresarios y propietarios de negocios nacidos en el extranjero

	cuyos propietarios son hispanos	cuyos propietarios son negros	cuyos propietarios son otra minoría	cuyos propietarios son mujeres	cuyos propietarios no son minoría
Total de firmas 14,093,288	422.373	424.185	376.711	4.114.787	8.755.252
Que venden entre $5.000 y $100.000	89%	93%	81%	92%	79%
Sin empleados pagados	60%	83%	74%	85%	69%
Casados al 31-XII-87	75.9%	66.6%	77.1%	70.3%	80%
Propietarios nacidos fuera de los E.U.	44.9%	14.7%	66.2%	11.4%	11.1%

1. Estadísticas más recientes de la División de Agricultura y Estadísticas Económicas, Departamento del Censo
2. Todos sectores industriales están representados, incluyendo negocio por menor y 'servicios selectos', es decir, legal, educación, reparación mecánica, servicios sociales...
3. Empresarios con *menos* de 25 años y más de 65 fueron investigados también (por lo general, la gente trabaja entre la edad de 25 y 64 años).

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Se habla de nuestra red en....

El Children's Post, Fairfax, VA, Septiembre 1995
Asian Fortune, Fairfax, VA, Octubre 1995
El Northern Virginia Sun Weekly, Arlington, VA, 26 de octubre de 1995
Association of American Foreign Service Women News (Asociación de las Mujeres del Servicio Diplomático), Washington DC, febrero 1996
Parent Weekly (semanal para padres), 31 de enero de 1996
Guía de Recursos para Padres, Condado de Arlington, 1996 puesto al día

Y.....

Smart Kids, Miami, Florida, abril 1996
State Department Magazine, abril/mayo 1996

También

• hemos escrito un artículo para el "Foreign Service Youth Foundation" en 1994 sobre "Cómo educar niños bilingües y en dos culturas en el hogar"
• pertenecemos al panel de lectores de Working Mother desde enero de 1996.

Para lectores jóvenes y padres

Papa Petit, Papa Small por Lois Lenski, Henry Z. Walck, New York, 1963. *Bilingüe en francés e inglés.*

Este librito puede que tenga poca atracción visual pero los padres pueden utilizar ayuda (estoy segura) al iniciar a los hijos en "labores del hogar". Disfrute su lectura (en ambos lenguajes) incluso si sus hijos todavía no están dispuestos a asumir sus responsabilidades en compartir labores de la casa.

Se encuentra en la biblioteca central de Arlington.

En la próxima edición

- La familia de FBPN
- Artículo por Dugan Romano, autor de *Intercultural Marriages: Promises and Pitfalls*, 1988 (Matrimonios interculturales: Promesas y Peligros, 1988)
- Ultima conección de FBPN: Una solución local inclusiva en una red de recursos
- **Reseña (Parte II):** *Bilingualismo y educación bilingüe: Una perspectiva de investigación por* K. Hakuta, primavera de 1990, (Universidad de Stanford). Más implicaciones prácticas para padres

Para recibir el próximo ejemplar de FBPN, favor de llenar y enviar este formulario junto a su cheque.

Nombre y apellido:

Dirección:

Teléfono en la casa:

Teléfono en la oficina:

Fax:

E-mail:

Favor de enviar una copia de FBPN a mi(s) amigo(s) según indico más abajo:

¿Cómo se enteró de la publicación de FBPN?

Favor de indicar los rubros que usted desearía que lo llamáramos o nos contactáramos por fax con usted! Gracias!

__ las prácticas utilizadas en su país para educar niños
__ nuestra familia en la próxima edición
__ escribir un artículo de interés para usted y nuestros lectores
__ estrategias para ser padres que funcionan para usted
__ sus preocupaciones más urgentes
__ cómo su empleador puede ayudar su comunidad étnica
__ otros?

"El 80% de los niños del Tercer Mundo crecen aprendiendo dos o más lenguajes."
El "Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning (Otoño 1995)

The
FOREIGN-BORN
Parent
NETWORK™
May/June 1996
Issue No. 5

An interactive and multicultural forum
for parent-citizens and partners in education

A multilingual publication of BOND
Alice T. Rasmussen, founder and editor

2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA ISSN 1085-3596 703 812 8716

EDITOR

360 degree learning is a winning norm!

Today's networked economy and networked leadership make it plainly obvious. With 360 degree learning, each one of us gains new perspectives by interacting with people across artificial boundaries, across cultures and generations. As we enter this dialogue, leaving our assumptions behind opens up new options.

With that in mind, we have joined one local school's initiative in cross-cultural solidarity and inclusive learning. At Bailey's Elementary School in Falls Church, parents are engaged in nurturing a 'hyphenated' community. The welcoming environment has been drawing me back like a magnet! (see p. 4)

In FBPN's own back yard in Arlington County, we hope to become involved with a voluntary initiative spearheaded by Marcela Von Vacano, a bilingual teacher and former Spanish immersion program coordinator. Marcela's article provides helpful pointers for raising bilingual children (p. 5). Part II of our review of research findings on bilingualism and bilingual education continues on page 2.

Preserving the home language and culture advantage has been one area of greatest concern to many of our readers. Lest we forget though, language opens the door to the richness of a culture. Some of our parents have a personal perspective on that. A few have also expressed interest in other cultures' child-rearing practices. So, we are now putting out a call to other parents about *their* culture's child-rearing/parenting practices. We urge you to respond.

We have started collecting articles which FBPN's dynamic and forward-looking parents have either shared or written themselves. *With 360 degree learning being FBPN's norm, this type of interchange is encouraged on a continuing basis.* We also urge you to complete the form on p. 8 so as to make our bonding experience meaninful to each one of you.

Whether our commitment is to raise bilingual children or become proficient in English (or another language), or simply, make a difference in our children's education, meaningful engagement begins with our perception of ourselves as competent, capable, valuable *and* valued partners. On p. 7, we suggest some indicators of progress as a tool to guide parents in their efforts. The more specific the indicators, the more useful they are. These can be the topic of a valuable article by and for parents as researchers (p. 3).

We also share with you a summary of exciting networking opportunities on p. 2. Our joint and successful event of March 17th with EF Intercultural Foundation is one instance of such global networking.(see p. 6)

Editor

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2 • What have we been up to?
• **Review (Part II)**: *Bilingualism and Bilingual Education: A Research Perspective* by Kenji Hakuta, Spring 1990 (Stanford University)

4 **FBPN's latest connection**: Fusion learning is energizing and powerful at Bailey's Elementary School, Falls Church

5 *Do's and Don'ts in Raising Bilingual Children* by Marcela Von Vacano or a bilingual teacher's perspective

6 Our March 17th family event was a success!

7 Tips for busy, working parents

8 For young readers and parents

Our mission

We are an interactive peer resource, advocate and multicultural support network for foreign-born and *all* parents whose lives are touched by the interaction between the home- and host-country cultures. We engage parents in a dialogue on how that cultural interaction affects parental involvement in second language learning, intercultural parenting, the workplace, school and community. All rights reserved worldwide.

Who we are

FBPN is an upbeat publication based on its founder's experience as a spouse in an intercultural marriage and a foreign-born parent whose personal mission has been to preserve the home culture while thriving in the host-culture and maintaining a global outlook.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) is published every two months by BOND (**B**usiness, **O**rganization and **N**etwork **D**evelopment), a global human resources consulting and training business.

What we can do for you

We offer
- parenting workshops and seminars
- consulting in multicultural community and organization development, including global human resources and leadership development, work-family and diversity strategic planning
- workshops on marketing across cultures
- advertising space.

How you can reach us

Phone and fax: 703 812-8716
E-mail: arasmusi@gmu.edu.

Membership rates

For a yearly subscription to FBPN (six issues):

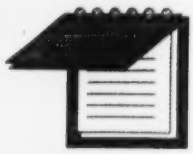
$35.00	individuals and families
$50.00	public, government and state institutions;non-profit organizations
$65.00	commercial, international, for-profit institutions and universities

We also offer
- international rates
- a 10% discount on multiple orders
- back issues at $5.00 per issue

Please send your check (payable to *The Foreign-born Parent Network*) **with the form on p. 8** to:

The Foreign-born Parent Network
2700 N. Wakefield Street
Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA

What have we been up to?



• We authored a letter to the editor of State Magazine, State Department, April/May 1996 to draw the agency's attention on the needs and resources represented by intercultural couples. Currently, no internal data are available on the size of this population.

• Our successful intercultural event of March 17th was a family affair co-sponsored by EF Intercultural Foundation. All proceeds went to a school selected by drawing. Read more about it on p. 6.

• FBPN's radio program on WUST AM1120 has been unfortunately postponed until May. Our public service program competes for air time with other public service programs which, as it was explained to me, have seniority over ours. Chances increase as the days get longer!

• Our newsletter is the first of its kind in the U.S. that bonds foreign-born parents in the preservation of "heritage languages". As such, we have drawn the attention of the National Foreign Language Center of John Hopkins University whose mission is to "improve U.S. capacity in languages other than English". At press time, I will be meeting with Dr. Wang Xueying, Senior Program Officer March 29th.. A follow-up meeting is scheduled with Ron Walton, the center's deputy-director who responded enthusiastically to FBPN's Nov./Dec. 1995 issue.

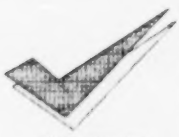
Review of Research (Part II)

Bilingualism and Bilingual Education: A Research Perspective
by Kenji Hakuta, Occasional paper, Spring 1990

In the predictable future, school budgets will continue to be strained by bulging student enrollment (Washington Post, March 25, 1996). As it appears, the preservation of non-English or "heritage languages" will likely be one of our principal tasks as we and our children go through the process of assimilation. During this process, most languages do not survive (See statistics in FBPN Nov/Dec. 1995 issue). That knowledge has had the paradoxical effect of strengthening me in my resolve.

Research to date (Hakuta and D'Andrea, 1990) indicates that the learner' attitude toward his/her own language plays a far bigger

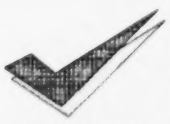
role in his/her ability to maintain the native language than to learn English. The language studied was Spanish and the subject of study was low English proficiency adolescent learners. The research cautions that findings may not be generalized to include native-English students learning a second language. The same note of caution applies to motivation.



6th implication

So, where does that leave us? As a parent of elementary age children, my experience has been that the seeds of positive attitude and motivation can and ought to be planted at a very early age. I have observed that one of the worst assumptions we could make as a parent is to take it for granted that our child will pick up the language 'just like that". In my experience, it takes effort, nurturing and patience.

Bilingualism has been associated with a superior ability to think abstractly about language at varying levels of a child's development (see Diaz 1983 for a review of intellectual performance in a variety of skills). There is still disagreement, however, as to the conditions and mechanisms that lead to these effects.



7th implication

Put simply, the second language advantage is our greatest gift to our child. However stressed and busy you may be, documenting indicators of success will help to keep you on track (see p. 7 for some suggestions.). Share yours with us!

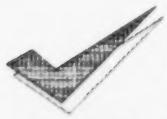
The bilingual parent as researcher

Our belief is that informed foreign-born parents can contribute to researchers' understanding of the social and cognitive abilities of the bilingual child, that is, yours and mine.

So, what is it that you do/don't do? What is it that you observe your child doing, saying or *not* doing, saying? Under what conditions do the above occur? Empirical documentation can aid researchers. *Your written input will be included in upcoming issues.*

FBPN editor

A key assumption of native language instruction is that skills and knowledge acquired in the native language transfer to English. Once a concept is learned, learning the appropriate vocabulary in the second language is easier. Research shows that *regardless* of the language, bilingual children apply *similar* strategies of comprehension.

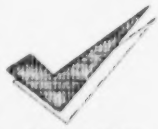


8th implication

Concerning the comprehension of concepts and new vocabulary, I have yet to read the same text twice to my kids, that is, in French and in English. Some parents shared with me that they do that and I would very much encourage them to observe reactions and take notes. Personally, I have resorted to singing, acting, illustrating and writing with a heavy dose of ingenuity rather than to direct translation as an aid to comprehension. Indeed, direct translation is always my very last resort.

Research associates proficiency in two languages with high ability in translation and interpretation. Effective "code switching" is observed when a bilingual child interacts with friends in two different languages. Hakuta (1990) and Malakoff & Hakuta have found that bilingual children were particularly adept at avoiding literal translation.

Let your child initiate whatever translation is necessary with the third party present. In fact, my 10 and six year old kids have always done it, without any prompting from me. Somehow, kids manage when left to their own devises. A number of parents feel compelled to translate, which is a tedious exercise. The message is that you may not need to. Yet, make sure that you inform those present that your primary medium of communication is not English because your child is being raised bilingual.



9th implication

Looking ahead, Dr. Hakuta suggests that non-English languages ought to be viewed as a precious "natural resource". FBPN could not agree more! Along that line, he indicates a continued concern with the perceived gap between elite bilingualism by formal study and folk bilingualism by background, the necessity to better align assessment methods with bilingual program development and, certainly, the necessity for international comparative research.

Considering that "heritage languages" become extinct, how does the institution of schooling promote or thwart bilingualism? What is known of the process of disappearance of those languages? What is in place to prevent their extinction? Dr. Hakuta's questions need to be addressed. I touched base with him recently to let him know about FBPN's reason for being.

An addiction our community can live with

Fusion learning is energizing and powerful!

Think of 360 degree learning as 'fusion learning'. 'Fusion' is a merging of diverse elements into a unified whole (Webster dictionary). Fusion releases heat and energy! Other than the fusion bomb, you can think of fusion marketing or joint marketing by noncompeting business partners (Home Office Computing, April 1996). Coalitions are another form of partnership by fusion. No less significant is the kind of fusion learning among parents our network seeks to promote. And no less energizing is the fusion learning I have been a part of at Bailey's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences in Falls Church.

What I see going on at Bailey's reminds me that ordinary talent is a valued stock in a community's network of resources; that ordinary leadership is no less extraordinary in the message that it conveys. What it takes for the impact to be felt by everyone is a welcoming environment. It is one that is woven through "horizontal bonds" to produce mutual trust (to borrow from Robert Putnam's Making Democracy Work, 1993).

Are we

1. challenging the process
2. inspiring a shared vision
3. enabling others to act
4. modeling the way
5. encouraging the heart?

Traits of leadership by Kouzes and Posner as reported in Association for Quality and Participation Newsletter (AQP), Dec./Jan. 1996

I connected with the school and its community about two months ago. The fact that the school PTA recently joined FBPN's network was not the driving factor. What keeps me coming back is that *I am seeing FBPN's vision of bonding across cultures realizing itself before my eyes.*

The doers and makers who are sharing this vision are thr principal, Carol Franz, the staff and parents like you and me. What is more, those parents are either bilingual or struggling-to-become bilingual. And even more significant is the fact that each and everyone involved is investing something to build a pulsing, inclusive community for the sake of children.

That investment has, indeed, a personal and tangible meaning as well as varied forms. Some have brought members of the local community to the biweekly community breakfasts. Out-of district parents drive their kids to the school. Still others help in the Spanish immersion classroom. For others involved, it has meant connecting with foreign-born parents as PTA membership or Spanish immersion chair in spite of their broken Spanish.

Clearly, no language barrier is insurmountable. In the predictable future, schools may never have enough funds to accomplish what needs to be accomplished. But are there enough of us to "model the way" and "encourage the hearts"?

Bailey's is a magnet school of national and international reputation. Its avowed objective is to achieve "both equity and quality" in the education of its children. The school has a population of 779 language immersion and magnet students who speak 18 different languages, including English.[1]

So far, I have toured the school and participated in community breakfasts. Those are well attended by Spanish-speaking and mainstream parents. I have set it as a goal to draw Asian-born parents into the community trailer.

My intention is not just representation (After all, I am not even a Bailey's parent). Beyond that, it is to get *more* parents to partake in the school's intercultural bounty. That way, the benefits ripple out into more families who will then invest back into their school for manifold returns.

So, what has been going on at these community breakfasts? I would say: a lot of intercultural learning, plenty of empathy, abundant humour, a fair amount of risk-taking from very ordinary people, some of whom barely speak the language of their counterpart. In my view, critical to the breakfasts' success are the bilingual 'connections', that is, the teachers and staff, community members and parents who dare to trip in halting Spanish or English and laugh at themselves when they take a tumble!

So following four visits and a presentation to the school's PTA board, this is what I have set out to accomplish:

• keep the interchange going between FBPN and the foreign-born affairs and Spanish immersion committees (this in no way excludes other committees.) [2]
• collect the accounts of *all* interested parents, i.e. mainstream and foreign-born who are actively engaged in the intercultural learning process.
• apply my parent-child and home-grown language immersion skills to a local school initiative in Arlington County (my home base). [3]

Each time I go to a community breakfast, I walk away feeling humbled, yet energized. Each visit reaffirms FBPN's mission of inspiring as I have been inspired, enabling parents-community stakeholders to act as I have felt enabled, modeling the way for my own children and, I hope, other parents, and encouraging them as I have felt encouraged.

My resolve is stronger today than it was yesterday, and stronger still tomorrow as FBPN continues to challenge the process through the power of our long-range vision. I have been heartened by the fact that our message is being heard both far and near.

FBPN's parents are "influentials"!*

They have made a choice regarding the preservation of the native/second language advantage. They are engaged in making a real difference in their children's future, and, for many, as bilingual connections in their multicultural community.

FBPN editor

* "A key finding of the 1995 'influentials' study.... was the need for a revival of the concept of citizenship in which Americans take more responsibility both for their own actions and for the course of their communities."

From a study conducted for the Atlantic Monthly as reported in *The Public Perspective*, February/March 1996

1. As of March 1996. These figures were provided by Denise Meister, current PTA membership co-chair.
2. My suggestion was welcomed by John Powell, the current PTA president.
3. I am hoping to assist Marcela Von Vacano in her initiative.

A call to foreign-born parents

Would you have any *practical* considerations or information to offer classroom teachers who work with your child and other students whose native language is not English? Thank you for responding promptly so that your comments make it into future issues before press time!

A bilingual teacher's perspective

Do's and Don'ts in raising bilingual children

by Marcela Von Vacano

For parents, the starting premise must be this: "My child is capable of learning a second language in the same manner he or she learns the first language." Cummins, Hakuta, Collier, Garcia, Wong Fillmore and other researchers have written extensively on the topic of second language acquisition.

I have been in the field of education and language learning for twenty eight years. As the former coordinator of a Spanish immersion program in Arlington County, Virginia and current bilingual instructor, I have had ample opportunity to obtain first hand and practical information on the process of second language acquisition.

Throughout those years, there have been many exchanges between me and my colleagues, researchers and other parents. The latter came to us with concerns, doubts and varied personal experiences in second language acquisition. As a result of those numerous exchanges, I have been able to come up with some practical do's and don'ts which our parents and readers might find useful.

Do's

• Talk positively about other languages and cultures.
• Take your child to places where he/she may be exposed to the language.
• Allow your child to explore books, music, dance, art related to the language.
• After you have decided that your child should pursue a second language, be patient and supportive.

• Show interest in your child's progress.
• Let your child complete his/her homework without your help as much as possible.
• Invest in books with visual appeal, picture dictionaries and other audio-visual materials.
• Make time for playtime with a classmate/neighbor who is fluent in the language.
• If you have the means and/or opportunity, take a trip to a country where the language is spoken.

Don'ts

• (If you should have a nanny), do not discourage the nanny from speaking about his/her native culture.
• Do not make negative comments about the school or teacher in front of your child.
• Do not force your child to produce the language in an overt manner.
• Do not put your child on the spot.
• Do not compare your child with other children.
• Do not use/buy books that are too difficult for your child's level.
• Do not force stages in language acquisition. The silent period may last several months. Plus, your child will go into the next stage of language production when he/she is ready.

Research indicates that it takes five to seven years to acquire a second language at an acceptable academic and social level. It is also important to keep in mind that second language learning is a life-long experience. Another factor of extreme importance is the readiness level of your child. Parents play a crucial role in establishing that level.

In summary, your child will acquire the second language as well as he or she did the first if the parent respects the culture of the language selected, allow time for the process to evolve and pledge long-term commitment.

Share with us and your children the gems of your native language!

"English is a strange language. There's no egg in eggplant, no pine or apple in pineapple, no ham in hamburger. Sweetmeats are candy, and sweetbreads are meat."

From Washington Post, Feb. 21, 1996, Ann Landers's column

I would like to close by saying that I believe that every child must be able to speak English but the human brain is capable of learning two, three, four or more languages. My own children speak four languages, so I know it works.

Our March 17th family event was a big success!

Let's start with some participants' feedback:

"I thought we were alone in that situation (i.e. raising children to speak more than one language)."

"It was a lot of honest fun for both kids and parents."

"It is so nice not having to worry about baby-sitting for the kids!"

"It is very well organized and thought out!"

Our special thanks to Tammy Johnson, EF program coordinator for making all the arrangements, i.e. catering, baby-sitting, musical entertainment. With Tammy was Anna McCaffery, EF's area manager.

The event's highlights were two drawings, one for an EF backpack, the other for the donation of the proceeds to a local foreign language/ ESL school program. We are pleased to report that a check of $100.00 was subsequently mailed to an elementary school in Chantilly, Virginia.

BOND, the founder of FBPN and EF are looking to forge a mutual association of interests for the long term. At press time, we are still at the initial stage of figuring out the terms of this alliance. The first outcome to be expected is a letter of intent in response to our request.

Such a request was made prior to the March 17th event when BOND and EF held an initial discussion which was, in effect, a glimpse at potential organizational benefits. It is BOND's understanding that EF could market its services by accessing

Your comments and feedback identify *your* needs and define *our* interactive and resource network

"Just as you said! Grabbing my son's interest *on the spot* was a sure way to sustain his attention. Pretty soon, we were acting out the French version of Superman. I was Lois and we were both flying away, sharing in the fun in French."

"You are dynamite! (This is a compliment in Italian!)"

"You have a knack for turning a negative around into a positive!"

"The members of Bailey's PTA voted unanimously in favor of the English and Spanish editions of FBPN."

"Bailey's PTA must subscribe to this publication for our community parents."

Get help INSTANTLY!

- Through the foreign-born family interview, we address your questions **on the spot** and share our suggestions.
- Need practical pointers? Those are featured in the section below as tips for busy, working parents.

Share your tips with busy, working parents

Q: What is a captivating way of communicating both your parental love and passion for the mother tongue ?

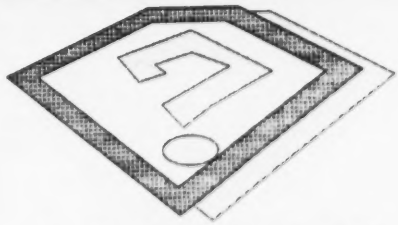
A: Love notes! Write them in big letters for your youngster to read. Put them at visible locations. And when he or she spots them, go over the message together, sing it and demonstrate its meaning! Better yet, write it again together. Your message of love is powerful in a number of ways. You have introduced writing and reading in the native language to your child! Best of all, it is sure to catch your child's attention in a heartfelt manner. Plus, you will feel energized in no time at all!

continued from p. 6...

FBPN's family database. We are currently identifying a policy framework that will facilitate future collaboration between the two organizations. So, until final details are worked out, call Alice at 703 812 8716 for updated information.

Note for our readers

Author Dugan Romano eventually declined our invitation for an article contribution. Although we regret that decision, FBPN understands that the upcoming publication of the 2nd edition of her book about intercultural marriages may entail tight deadlines. We apologize to our readers for any convenience.



Your indicators of success?

1. My spouse actually reads the newsletter! There was little interest before.
2. Family time spent interacting in the second language has increased from ___ to ___ a day/week!
3. Thus, TV time was cut back from ___ to ___ shows a day/week!

In quality management, indicators are an effective way to monitor progress. Do you have others? Your response will be the subject of a valuable article!

We were featured in

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NELL), Center for Applied Linguistics, Winter 1995-1996, Washington, D.C.

and reviewed in

The Newsletter on Newsletters, published by the Newsletter Clearinghouse, Rhinebeck, New York, March 7, 1996.

Our special thanks to

Marcela Von Vacano
Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Iowa State University, NELL editor

and

to those many members who have referred other parents to our network. There may be nothing more contagious than a parent's enthusiasm for an identified cause!

For young readers and parents

My First Book of Proverbs/Mi Primer Libro de Dichos, written and illustrated by Ralfka Gonzalez and Ana Ruiz, Children's Book Press, 1995 (for ages 6 to 12)

Bilingual book that reflects folk wisdom of times past as reviewed by Peter Neumeyer and Kathleen Krull in Washington Parent, Nov/Dec 1995. Won Washington Parent's sixth annual National Parenting Publications Awards 1995.

In our next issue

- FBPN's foreign-born family
- Foreign language immersion in the home: what is your formula?
- Foreign language learning models: available options
- **Book review:** Breaking the Language Barrier by H. Douglas Brown with a foreword by Senator Paul Simon, 1991

To receive FBPN's next issue, please complete and mail this form with your check.

Name

Mailing address:

Home phone:
Work phone:
Fax:
E-mail:

Are you interested in hosting opportunities?
___ YES __ NO
If yes, specify which country(ies):

How did you hear about FBPN?

Please check items you would like us to call or fax you about. Thank you!

__ your country's child-rearing/parenting practices
__ being our next foreign-born family feature
__ writing an article of interest to you and our readers
__ intercultural parenting strategies that work for you
__ your indicators of success
__ how your employer could help your ethnic community
__ practical considerations for classroom teachers
__ other?

Just 5% of college graduates are proficient in a foreign language.
American Institute for Foreign Study (as reported in Personnel Journal, Spring 1996)

Red
de PADRES
Extranjeros
DE NACIMIENTO™
Mayo/Junio de 1996
No. 5

Un foro multicultural e interactivo para
padres ciudadanos y compañeros en la educación

Une publicación multilingüe de BOND
Alice T. Rasmussen, fundadora y editora

2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 E.U. ISSN 1085-3596 703 812 8716

EDITOR

¡Un aprendizaje de 360 grados es una norma ganadora!

La economía y el liderazgo de hoy en día, dentro de una red interconectada, hace que esta verdad sea obvia. Un aprendizaje de 360 grados significa que cada uno de nosotros obtiene nuevas perspectivas al interactuar con gente, a través de barreras artificiales, a través de culturas y generaciones. Si comenzamos el diálogo dejando atrás nuestros supuestos se abren opciones nuevas.

Teniendo esto en cuenta, hemos adherido a la iniciativa de una escuela local de solidaridad inter-cultural, que incluye el aprendizaje. En la escuela primaria de Bailey's, en Falls Church, los padres se comprometen a llevar adelante una comunidad "con guión de unión". El ambiente caluroso me atrae como un imán (véase la pág. 4).

En el propio patio de FBPN en el Condado de Arlington, esperamos integrar una iniciativa voluntaria de Marcela Von Vacano, maestra bilingüe y ex-coordinadora del programa de inmersión en español. El artículo de Marcela nos da sugerencias muy útiles para criar niños bilingües (pág. 5). La Segunda Parte de nuestra revisión sobre resultados de investigación acerca del bilingualismo y educación bilingüe continúa en la página 2.

La ventaja de preservar el idioma y la cultura en el hogar ha sido un área de mayor preocupación para muchos de nuestros lectores. Para que no nos olvidemos, el idioma abre la puerta a las riquezas de una cultura. Algunos de nuestros padres tienen una perspectiva personal sobre esto. Algunos han expresado también interés en las prácticas de otras culturas sobre crianza de niños. Así, estamos solicitando a los demás padres que compartan sus conocimientos sobre las prácticas de crianza de niños en *sus* culturas. Les instamos a responder.

Hemos comenzado a compilar artículos que los dinámicos y futuristas padres de FBPN han compartido con nosotros o han escrito ellos mismos. *Siendo la norma de FBPN el aprendizaje de 360 grados, les instamos a realizar este tipo de intercambio en forma continua.* Asimismo les rogamos completar el formulario de la página 8 a fin de poder enriquecer la experiencia de cada uno de nosotros.

EN ESTE NUMERO

2 • ¿Qué hemos estado haciendo?
• **Reseña (Parte II)**: *Bilingualismo y Educación Bilingüe: Una Perspectiva de Investigación por* Kenji Hakuta, primavera 1990 (Universidad de Stanford)

4 **Nuestra conexión más reciente**: En la escuela primaria de Bailey's en Falls Church, el aprendizaje de fusión da energía y poder.

5 *Lo que debe hacerse y lo que no debe hacerse al criar niños bilingües* por Marcela Von Vacano o perspectiva de una maestra bilingüe

6 ¡El evento familiar del 17 de marzo fué un éxito!

7 Comparta sus sugerencias con los padres trabajadores muy ocupados

8 Para lectores jóvenes y padres

Ya sea que nuestra responsabilidad es el de criar niños bilingües o perfeccionar el idioma inglés (u otro idioma) o simplemente interesarnos en la educación de nuestros niños, para tomar un compromiso significativo comencemos con nuestra percepción de nosotros mismos como competentes, capaces, invalorables *y* valorados compañeros. Les sugerimos algunos indicadores de éxito (pág. 7). Lo más específico, lo mejor. Así que éstos se pueden incluir en un artículo por y para padres-investigadores (véase pág. 3).

Estamos compartiendo con ustedes un resumen de interesantes oportunidades en la red en la página 2. El exitoso evento conjunto con la Fundación Intercultural de EF del 17 de marzo es un ejemplo de nuestra red global (véase pág. 6).

Editora

Nuestra misión

Somos una red de apoyo y defensa multicultural, interactiva y con recursos de nuestros pares dedicada a padres nacidos en el extranjero y a *todos* cuyas vidas están marcadas por la interacción entre la cultura del país de origen y aquella donde residen. Comprometemos a los padres para dialogar sobre cómo esta interacción cultural afecta el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma, el hecho de venir de diferentes culturas el cual marca el compromiso de los padres, el lugar de trabajo, la escuela y la comunidad. Derechos de autor 1995 de FBPN "The Foreign-born Parent Network" (Red de Padres Extranjeros de Nacimiento) en cualquier forma, o en cualquier país o idioma que sea.

¿Quiénes somos?

FBPN es una publicación optimista basada en la experiencia de su fundadora como esposa en un matrimonio intercultural y madre nacida en el extranjero cuya misión personal ha sido la preservación de la cultura nativa al mismo tiempo que prosperaba en la cultura del país de residencia, manteniendo una visión global.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) es publicada cada dos meses por BOND "Business, Organization and Network Development" (Desarrollo de la Organización, Negocios y de la Red), un negocio de capacitación y consultoría en recursos humanos globales.

¿Qué podemos hacer por usted?

Ofrecemos
- seminarios y talleres para padres
- consultorías en desarrollo de organización y comunidad multicultural, incluyendo recursos humanos globales y desarrollo de liderazgo, familia y trabajo y planeamiento estratégico en diversidad
- talleres en técnicas de venta a través de diferentes culturas
- espacio para publicidad multicultural

¿Cómo puede contactarnos?

Teléfono y fax: 703 812-8716
E-mail (correo electrónico): arasmus1@gmu.edu.

Cuota de socio

Para una subscripción de un año a FBPN (seis ejemplares):

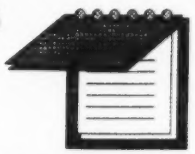
$35,00	individual o familias
$50,00	público, instituciones estatales y de gobierno, organizaciones sin fines de lucro
$65,00	comercial, internacional, instituciones y universidades con fines de lucro

También ofrecemos
- tarifa internacional
- 10% de descuento en órdenes múltiples
- ediciones anteriores a $5,00 cada uno

Favor enviar su cheque (pagadero en dólares a *The Foreign-born Parent Network*) **con el formulario de página 8 a:**

The Foreign-born Parent Network
2700 N. Wakefield Street
Arlington, VA 22207-4131 USA

¿Qué hemos estado haciendo?



- Redactamos una carta al editor del State Magazine, del Departamento de Estado, Abril/Mayo de 1996 para que la agencia tome conciencia de las necesidades y recursos que representan las parejas interculturales. Hasta ahora no existe información interna disponible acerca del tamaño de esta población.

- El exitoso evento intercultural del 17 de marzo fue llevado a cabo en conjunto con la Fundación Intercultural de EF. Lo recaudado se entregó a una escuela escogida por sorteo. Más detalles en la página 6.

- Desafortunadamente la emisión de radio de FBPN en la radio WUST AM1120 ha sido pospuesta para mayo. Nuestro programa de servicio público compite por tiempo en el aire con otros programas de servicio público los que, según me explicaron, tienen precedencia sobre el nuestro. Pero las oportunidades crecen a medida que los días se alargan!

- Nuestra publicación es la primera en su tipo en los Estados Unidos, que une a los padres nacidos en el extranjero en la preservación del "idioma de herencia". Como tales, hemos llamado la atención del Centro Nacional de los Idiomas Extranjeros de la Universidad John Hopkins, cuya misión es "mejorar la capacidad de los Estados Unidos en otros idiomas que no sean el inglés". Cuando esta edición esté en imprenta, me reuniré con el Dr. Wang Xueying, Oficial de Programa Senior, el 29 de marzo. Seguirá una reunión con el Prof. Ron Walton, subdirector del centro quien reaccionó con entusiasmo a nuestra edición de Nov/Dic. de 1995.

Reseña de Investigación (II parte)

Bilingualismo y Educación Bilingüe: Una Perspectiva de Investigación por Kenji Hakuta, escrito ocasional, primavera de 1990

En un futuro predecible, los presupuestos escolares continuarán sintiendo el peso del registro creciente de estudiantes (Washington Post, 25 de marzo de 1996). Según parece, la preservación de los idiomas que no sean inglés o "idiomas de herencia" recaerá seguramente sobre nosotros y nuestros niños en el proceso de asimilación. Durante este proceso, la mayoría de los idiomas no sobreviven (Véase las estadísticas en nuestra edición de Nov/Dic.1995). Ese conocimiento ha tenido el efecto paradójico de reforzar mi resolución.

La investigación hasta la fecha (Hakuta y d'Andrea, 1990) indica que la actitud del estudiante hacia su propio idioma juega un pa-

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pel mucho más importante en su habilidad para conservar el idioma nativo que para aprender inglés. El idioma que se estudió fue el español y el tema del estudio era la baja eficiencia en inglés de los estudiantes adolescentes. La investigación advierte que no deben generalizarse los resultados incluyendo el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma por estudiantes cuya lengua nativa es el inglés. La misma advertencia se aplica en cuanto a la motivación.

6a consecuencia

Por lo tanto, ¿qué significa esto para nosotros? Como madre de niños de edad primaria he tenido la experiencia que se puede y se debe sembrar la semilla de una actitud positiva y motivada desde muy temprana edad. La peor suposición que puede hacerse, según he observado, es creer que nuestro hijo va a aprender el idioma "así no más". Según mi experiencia, esto toma esfuerzo, cuidado y paciencia.

El bilingualismo ha sido asociado a la habilidad de pensar en forma abstracta acerca del idioma en los diversos niveles de desarrollo del niño (véase Diaz 1983 por una revisión del desempeño intelectual en una variedad de tareas). Aún hay desacuerdo, sin embargo, en cuanto a las condiciones y mecanismos que llevan a ese efecto.

7a consecuencia

Es decir, simplemente, la ventaja de un segundo idioma el el regalo más grande que podemos dar a nuestros hijos. No importa cuan ocupada y tensa uno esté, el documentar de indicadores de éxito le ayudará a mantenerlo en el buen camino (véase pág. 7 para algunas sugerencias). Comparta las suyas con nosotros!

Una suposición clave en la instrucción de un idioma nativo es que las habilidades y conocimientos que se adquieren en el idioma nativo se transfieren al inglés. Una vez que se aprende un concepto, es más fácil aprender el vocabulario adecuado en el segundo idioma. La investigación muestra que *no importa el idioma*, los niños bilingües aplican estrategias *similares* de comprensión.

Los padres bilingües como investigadores

Creo que los padres nacidos en el extranjero que estén informados pueden contribuir a que los investigadores comprendan las habilidades sociales y cognitivas del niño bilingüe, es decir, sus hijos y los míos.

Así, qué es lo que usted hace o no hace? Qué es lo que usted ve que su niño hace, dice o no hace, dice? Bajo qué condiciones ocurre esto? La documentación empírica puede ayudar a los investigadores. *Su contribución escrita puede incluirse en próximas ediciones.*

Editora de FBPN

8va consecuencia

Con referencia a la comprensión de conceptos y nuevo vocabulario, nunca he leído el mismo texto dos veces, es decir, una vez en francés y la otra en inglés. Algunos padres compartieron conmigo el hecho de que ellos lo hacen así y yo los aliento a que observen las reacciones y tomen notas. Personalmente, yo recurrí a cantar, actuar, ilustrar y escribir con mucho ingenio más que a traducir directamente para ayudar a la comprensión. Por cierto, recurro a la traducción directa sólo como último recurso.

La investigación asocia la capacidad en dos idiomas a una gran habilidad para traducir e interpretar. Se observa un efectivo "cambio de código" cuando un niño bilingüe interactúa con amigos en dos diferentes idiomas. Hakuta (1990) y Malakoff & Hakuta descubrieron que los niños bilingües eran particularmente adeptos en evitar la traducción literal.

9na consecuencia

Deje a su niño que inicie cualquier traducción que fuera necesaria con la tercera persona presente. Por cierto mis hijas de 10 y seis años siempre lo han hecho, sin que yo les dijera nada. De alguna manera, los niños se las arreglan cuando se les deje hacerlo por ellos mismos. Cierto número de padres se sienten obligados a hacerlo, lo que es una tarea tediosa. El mensaje es que usted no tiene por que hacerlo. Sin embargo, asegúrase de informar a los presentes que su principal medio de comunicación no es el inglés porque su niño se está criando como bilingüe.

Mirando hacia adelante, el Dr. Hakuta sugiere que los idiomas que no son el inglés deben ser vistos como un "recurso natural" precioso. FBPN está completamente de acuerdo! En esta misma vena, indica una preocupación constante con la brecha que se percibe entre el bilingualismo de elite logrado por estudios formales y el bilingualis-

mo popular que se obtiene por los propios antecedentes, la necesidad de aliñar los métodos de valoración con el desarrollo de programas bilingües y, por cierto, la necesidad de investigación comparativa internacional.

Teniendo en cuenta la posibilidad de que los "idiomas de herencia" desaparezcan, cómo puede la institución escolar promover o coartar el bilingualismo? Qué se conoce del proceso de desaparición de esos idiomas? Qué hay previsto para prevenir su desaparición? Debemos poner atención a las preguntas del Dr. Hakuta. Lo contacté recientemente para hacerle saber la razón de la existencia de nuestra red.

Nuestra comunidad puede vivir con esta adicción

El aprendizaje de fusión da energía y poder!

Piense en el aprendizaje de 360 grados como un "aprendizaje de fusión". "Fusión" es la mezcla de diversos elementos en un todo unificado (diccionario Webster). La fusión libera calor y energía! Además de la bomba de fusión, puede pensarse en mercadeo de fusión o mercadeo conjunto entre socios que no compiten entre sí ("Home Office Computing", Abril 1996). Coaliciones son otra forma de sociedad por fusión. No menos significativo es el tipo de aprendizaje por fusión entre padres que nuestra red trata de promover. Y no menos energizante es el aprendizaje de fusión del que he sido parte en la Escuela Elemental para las Artes y las Ciencias de Bailey's, en Falls Church.

Estamos nosotros
1. desafiando el proceso
2. inspirando una visión compartida
3. permitiendo a otros actuar
4. modelando el camino
5. alentando el corazón?

Rasgos de liderazgo por Kouzes Y Posner según se informa en el "Association for Quality and Participation Newsletter" (Boletín de la Asociación por la Participación y la Calidad) (AQP), Dic/Ene. de 1996.

Lo que puedo ver que ocurre en Bailey's me recuerda que el talento ordinario es un recurso valioso en una red de recursos de una comunidad; que el liderazgo ordinario no es menos extraordinario en el mensaje que conlleva. Lo que se necesita para que todos sientan el impacto es un ambiente caluroso. Es lo que se entreteje con las "uniones horizontales" para producir la confianza mutua (pedido prestado a Making Democracy Work (Haciendo que la democracia resulte) de Robert Putnam, 1993.

Me conecté con la escuela hace aproximadamente dos meses. El hecho de que el 'PTA' de la escuela se adhirió recientemente a la red de FBPN , no fué el factor principal que me impulsó a hacerlo. Lo que me lleva a volver es que *veo a FBPN como la unión entre culturas que se produce delante mis ojos.*

Los que hacen y comparten esta visión conmigo son la directora, la Sra Carol Franz, el personal y los padres como usted y yo. Más aún, ellos son bilingües o procuran serlo. Y más significativo aún es el hecho que cada uno de ellos invierte para edificar una comunidad inclusiva que pulsa, por el bien de los niños.

Esta inversión tiene, en verdad, un significado personal y tangible así como diversas formas. Algunos traen miembros a los desayunos de la comunidad, dos veces por semana. Los padres que viven fuera del distrito conducen a sus hijos a la escuela. Otros incluso ayudan en la clase de inmersión de español. Para otras personas ha significado conectarse con los padres nacidos en el extranjero con miembros del 'PTA' o de la cátedra de inmersión de español, a pesar de su español titubeante.

Evidentemente, no hay barrera de idioma que no pueda superarse. En un futuro predecible, las escuelas pueden no tener fondos suficientes para llevar a cabo lo que haya que cumplir. Pero hay suficiente número de nosotros para "modelar el camino" y "alentar los corazones"?

La escuela de Bailey's es un imán de reputación nacional e internacional. Como tal, su objetivo enunciado es conseguir "tanto igualdad como calidad" en la educación de sus alumnos. La escuela cuenta con 779 estudiantes de inmersión de idioma e imanes, que hablan 18 idiomas diferentes, incluyendo el inglés. [1]

Hasta ahora, he visitado la escuela y concurrido a los desayunos comunitarios a los que asistieron principalment padres de habla hispana y corrientes. Me he propuesto como objetivo atraer a los padres nacidos en Asia al "community trailer" (remolque donde nos reunimos).

Mi intención no es solamente estar representados (después de todo no soy una madre de Bailey's). Más que eso, se trata de conseguir *más* padres que compartan la riqueza intercultural de la escuela. De esta manera, la ola de beneficios llega a más familias quienes, a su vez, invertirán en su escuela para obtener resultados crecientes.

Entonces, qué ha estado ocurriendo en estos desayunos comunitarios? Yo diría: mucho aprendizaje intercultural, mucha simpatía, mucho humor, una cierta cantidad de arriesgarse de gente ordinaria, algunos de los cuales apenas hablan el idioma de su compañero. A mi modo de ver, un aspecto crítico del éxito de estos desayunos son las "conecciones" bilingües, es decir, los maestros y el personal, los miembros de la comunidad y los padres que se arriesgan a hablar español o inglés y reirse de ellos mismos si tropiezan!

Así que después de cuatro visitas y una presentación al Directorio del 'PTA', esto es lo que me propongo realizar:

- mantener el intercambio entre FBPN y los asuntos concernientes a las personas nacidas en el extranjero y los comités de inmersión de español (lo que no excluye otros comités).
- reunir las cuentas de *todos* los padres interesados, por ejemplo, corrientes y nacidos en el extranjero que sean activos en el proceso de aprendizaje intercultural.[2]
- aplicar mis habilidades de inmersión de idioma del hogar e intercambio madre-hijas, en un iniciativa de una escuela local en el Condado de Arlington (donde está basado mi hogar).[3]

Cada vez que voy me siento humilde, pero con energía. Cada visita reafirma la misión de FBPN de inspirar, como he sido inspirada, permitiendo a la comunidad de padres a que actúen, como yo me he sentido alentada, modelando el camino para mis propias hijas y, espero, para otros padres alentándolos de la misma manera que yo lo he sido.

Mi resolución es más fuerte hoy en día que lo que fué ayer, y lo será más mañana a medida que FBPN continúe a desafiar el proceso con el poder de nuestra visión de largo alcance. He sido alentada por el hecho de que nuestro mensaje ha sido escuchado tanto sea lojos como cerca.

1. A marzo de 1996. Estas cifras fueron suministradas por Denise Meister, actual cátedra asociada de los miembros del 'PTA'.
2. El Sr. John Powell, actual presidente del 'PTA' recibió con placer mi sugerencia.
3. Espero poder asistir a Marcela Von Vacano con su iniciativa.

Los padres de FBPN tienen influencia!*

Ellos han tomado su decisión en cuanto a preservar la ventaja del idioma nativo/segundo. Ellos tomaron un compromiso para marcar una diferencia real en el futuro de sus hijos, y, para muchos, como conecciones bilingües en su comunidad multicultural.

Editora de FBPN

*** Un descubrimiento clave en el estudio de 1995 sobre las "influencias ... fue la necesidad de reavivar el concepto de ciudadanía para que los americanos sean más responsables tanto por sus propias acciones com por sus comunidades"**

De un estudio llevado a cabo por Atlantic Monthly según se informó en "The Public Perspective", Feb/Marzo 1996

Perspectiva de una maestra bilingüe

Lo que debe hacerse y lo que no debe hacerse al criar niños bilingües

por Marcela Von Vacano

La premisa inicial para los padres debe ser: "Mi hijo es capaz de aprender un segundo idioma de la misma forma que él o ella aprendió su primer idioma." Cummins, Hakuta, Collier, Carcia, Wong Fillmore y otros investigadores han escrito extensivamente sobre el tema de adquirir un segundo idioma.

He estado en el campo de la educación y aprendizaje de idiomas por 28 años. Como ex-coordinadora del programa de inmersión en español en el Condado de

Una invitación a los padres de FBPN

Tendrían ustedes algunas consideraciones prácticas para dar a maestros que trabajan con sus hijos y otros estudiantes cuyos idiomas nativos no son inglés? Gracias por contestar con prontitud para que sus comentarios puedan ser incorporados en futuras ediciones antes de que deban ser enviadas a imprenta!

Arlington, Virginia y actual instructora bilingüe, he tenido amplia oportunidad para conseguir de primera mano y como información práctica sobre el proceso de adquisición de un segundo idioma.

Durante estos años hemos realizado muchos intercambios entre mis colegas, investigadores y otros padres. Estos últimos nos traían sus preocupaciones, dudas y experiencias personales variadas en la adquisición de un segundo idioma. Como resultado de estos numerosos intercambios he obtenido algunas guías prácticas de lo que debe hacerse y lo que no debe hacerse, que puede resultar de interés para nuestros padres y lectores.

Lo que debe hacerse

- Hable en forma positiva acerca de otros idiomas y culturas.
- Lleve a su hijo/a a lugares donde pueda estar en contacto con el idioma.
- Deje que su hijo/a explore libros, el arte de la música y de la danza referidos al idioma.
- Luego de decidir que su hijo/a debe adquirir un segundo idioma, sea paciente y apóyelo/a.
- muestre interés en el progreso de su hijo/a.
- Deje que su hijo/a termine sus deberes sin su ayuda, en lo que sea posible.
- Invierta en libros visualmente atractivos, diccionarios con dibujos y otros materiales audio-visual.
- Haga tiempo para juegos con un compañero de clase o vecino que sea fluido en el idioma.
- Si usted tiene los medios y/o oportunidad, realice un viaje al país donde se habla el idioma.

Lo que no se debe hacer

- (Si usted tiene niñera), no coarte a la niñera para que no hable acerca de su cultura nativa.
- No comente negativamente acerca de la escuela o la maestra enfrente de su niño/a.
- No fuerce a su hijo/a a utilizar el idioma de manera pública.
- No exponga a su niño "a la luz del reflector".
- No compare a su hijo/a con otros niños.
- No utilice/compre libros que son demasiado difíciles para el nivel de su niño/a.
- No fuerce etapas en la adquisición del idioma. El período silencioso puede durar varios meses. Además, su hijo/a procederá a pasar al próximo nivel cuando él/ella esté listo.

La investigación indica que la adquisición de un idioma toma cinco a siete años, para un nivel académico y social aceptable.

Es importante también notar que el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma es una experiencia de toda la vida. Otro factor de suma imprtancia es el nivel de madurez de su niño/a. Los padres juegan un papel crucial en el establecimiento de ese nivel.

En resumen, su hijo/a aprenderá un segundo idioma tan bien como ha aprendido el primero si los padres respetan la cultura del idioma seleccionado, dan tiempo para que el proceso se desarrolle y toman un compromiso a largo plazo.

Me gustaría terminar diciendo que creo que cada niño debe poder hablar inglés pero que el cerebro humano es capaz de aprender dos, tres, cuatro y más idiomas. Mis propios hijos hablan cuatro idiomas, por lo que se que es posible.

Comparta con nosotros y con sus hijos algunas joyas de su idioma nativo!

"El inglés es un idioma extraño. En la palabra "eggplant" (berenjena) no hay "egg" (huevo), en "pineapple" (ananá) no hay "pine" (pino) o "apple" (manzana), tampoco hay "ham" (jamón) en "hamburger" (hamburguesa). "Sweetmeats" (literalmente carnes dulces) es un caramelo, y "sweetbreads" (literalmente panes dulces) son carne.

Del Washington Post, 21 de febrero, 1996 en la columna de Ann Landers.

El evento familiar del 17 de marzo fué un éxito!

Comencemos mencionando lo que algunos participantes dijeron:

"Pensábamos que eramos los únicos en esa situación (es decir, criando hijos que hablaran más de un idioma)".

"Fue una diversión honesta tanto para padres como para hijos".

"Es tan lindo no tener que preocuparse de cuidar los niños en estos eventos".

"Está muy bien organizado y bien pensado".

Agradecemos especialmente a Tammy Johnson, coordinadora de EF, por sus arreglos para el servicio de comida, el cuidado de los niños y la diversión musical. Junto a Tammy estuvo Anna McCaffery, gerente del área.

Como puntos culminantes del evento se realizaron dos sorteos, uno para la mochila 'EF', el otro para donar las ganancias para un programa de ESL o idioma extranjero en una escuela local. Nos es grato informar que se envió un cheque por $100.00 a una escuela primaria en Chantilly, Virginia.

BOND, el fundador de FBPN y EF piensan crear

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Sus comentarios identifican *sus* necesidades y definen *nuestra* red interactiva de recursos

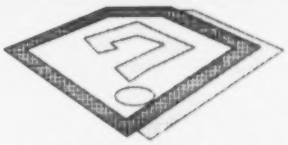
"Tal como usted lo dijo! Atrapando el interés de mi hijo *en el momento* fue una manera segura de mantener su atención. Bien pronto, estábamos realizando la versión francesa de Superman. Yo era Lois and volábamos, compartiendo la diversión en francés".

"Usted es una dinamita! (Este es un cumplido en italiano.)".

"Usted tiene el don de convertir algo negativo en positivo!"

"Los miembros del 'PTA' de Bailey's votaron unánimamente a favor de las ediciones de FBPN en inglés y en español".

"El 'PTA' de Bailey's debe suscribirse a esta publicación para los padres de la comunidad".



Sus indicadores de éxito?

1. Mi cónyuge ahora lee este boletín. Antes mostraba poco interés.
2. El tiempo en familia utilizado para intercambio en el segundo idioma ha incrementado de ____ a ____por día/semana!
3. Así, el tiempo dedicado a la TV diminuyó de ____ a ____ emisiones por día/semana!

Tienen ustedes otros indicadores de calidad? Su respuesta se incluirá en un valoroso artículo.

Nota para nuestros lectores

El autor Dugan Romano eventualmente declinó nuestra invitación para contribuir con un artículo. A pesar que lamentamos tal decisión, FBPN comprende que el hecho de estar por publicar la segunda edición de su libro acerca de matrimonios interculturales conlleva límites de entrega restringidos. Pedimos disculpas a nuestros lectores por cualquier inconveniente.

¡Obtenga ayuda en forma instantánea!

- Por intermedio de entrevistas de familias nacidas en el extranjero contestamos sus preguntas **en el momento** y compartimos nuestras sugerencias.
- Necesita sugerencias prácticas? Estas sugerencias las encuentra compartidas en la sección que sigue como "Sugerencias para padres trabajadores muy ocupados".

Comparta sus sugerencias con los padres trabajadores muy ocupados

Pregunta: En qué forma atractiva puede usted transmitir tanto su amor de padre como su pasión por la lengua natal?

Respuesta: Con notas de amor! Escríbalas en letras grandes para que sus retoños las lean. Colóquelas en lugares visibles. Y cuando él/ella las vea, léanlas juntos, cántenlas y demuestre su significado. Más aún, vuélvanlas a escribir juntos. Su mensaje de amor es poderoso de muchas maneras. Usted ha introducido la escritura y la lectura en su idioma natal a su niño/a. Mejor aún, llamará la atención de su hjijo/a tocándole el corazón. Y además, usted se sentirá con energía sin pérdida de tiempo!

de la página 6...

una asociación de intereses mutuos a largo plazo. Al momento de impresión, nos encontramos en la etapa inicial para establecer los términos de esta alianza. Lo que puede esperarse como primera consecuencia en este momento es una carta de intención como respuesta a nuestra solicitud.

Esta solicitud se realizó con anterioridad al evento del 17 de marzo, cuando BOND y EF tuvieron la primera reunión que consistió, en realidad, a esbozar los beneficios organizacionales potenciales. BOND entiende que EF podría mercadear sus servicios recurriendo a la base de informaciones de familias de FBPN. Estamos en el momento diseñando un sistema de políticas que facilitará la colaboración futura entre las dos organizaciones. Por lo tanto, mientras se terminen de finalizar los detalles, favor de llamar a Alice al 703 812 8716 para últimas informaciones.

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Nos mencionaron en

The Journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NELL) (Periódico de la Red Nacional para el Aprendizaje Temprano de Idiomas), Center for Applied Linguistics (Centro de Lingüística Aplicada), Invierno 1995/1996, Washington D.C.

Y nos analizaron en

The Newsletter on Newsletters, publicado por el "Newsletter Clearinghouse", Rhinebeck, Nueva York, marzo de 1996

Nuestro especial agradecimiento para

Marcela Von Vacano
Marcia H. Rosenbusch, Universidad de Iowa State, editora de NELL

Y también para

a los muchos miembros que han atraido a otros padres a nuestra red. No hay nada más contagioso que el entusiasmo de un padre por una causa con la que se identifica!

Para lectores jóvenes y padres

My First Book of Proverbs/Mi primer Libro de Dichos, escrito e ilustrado por Ralfka Gonzalez y Ana Ruiz, "Children's Book Press" (Imprenta de Libros para Niños), 1995 (para las edades de seis a 12 años).

Libro *bilingüe* que refleja la sabiduría popular de tiempos pasados según revisión de Peter Neumeyer y Kathleen Krull en Washington Parent , Nov/Dic. 1995. Ganó el sexto Premio Nacional de Publicaciones para Padres anual 1995.

En la próxima edición

- La familia de FBPN
- Inmersión en un idioma extranjero en el hogar: cuál es su fórmula?
- Modelos de aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros: opciones disponibles
- **Revisión de Libro:** Breaking the Language Barrier (Rompiendo la barrera del lenguaje) por H. Douglas Brown con un prefacio del Senador Paul Simon, Intercultural Press, 1991.

Para recibir el próximo ejemplar de FBPN, favor de llenar y enviar este formulario junto a su cheque.

Nombre y apellido:

Dirección:

Teléfono en la casa:

Teléfono en la oficina:

Fax:

E-mail:

Favor de enviar una copia de FBPN a mi(s) amigo(s) según indico más abajo:

¿Cómo se enteró de la publicación de FBPN?

Favor de indicar los rubros que usted desearía que lo llamáramos o nos contactáramos por fax con usted! Gracias!

__ las prácticas utilizadas en su país para educar niños
__ nuestra familia en la próxima edición
__ escribir un artículo de interés para usted y nuestros lectores
__ estrategias para ser padres que funcionan para usted
__ sus indicadores de éxito
__ cómo su empleador puede ayudar su comunidad étnica
__ consideraciones prácticas para los maestros
__ otros?

"Solamente el cinco porciento de los graduados universitarios tienen fluencia en un idioma extranjero".

American Institute for Foreign Study (Instituto Americano para el Estudio en el Extranjero), según se informa en Personnel Journal (Periodico de los Recursos Humanos, Primavera 1996)

The
FOREIGN-BORN
Parent
NETWORK™

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for parent-citizens and partners in education

A multilingual publication of BOND
Alice T. Rasmussen, founder and editor

Alice T. Rasmussen, 2700 N. Wakefield Street, Arlington, VA 22207-4131 703 812 8716
FBPN/International, AMEMB Box B, APO AP 96546 USA

The power of *your* pen!

In the previous issue, I suggested that putting observations, questions and indicators of success in writing is one effective way to turn self-doubt into a catalyst for informed decisions. In so doing, we are better able to assess where we are at present and where we need to be next. What better way for parents to monitor their family's progress!

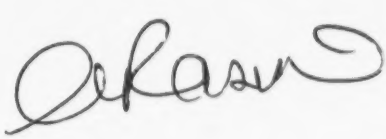
At the same time, we contribute data for research on bilingual child-rearing, native language preservation and the family-school-community interaction. Come to think of it, even our first grade kids learn to keep a journal in school! And why not, you might as well pen your own success for posterity! There is something reassuring about taking notes too, I find. By committing our thoughts in writing, we take control and can effectively steer away from helplessness.

There is yet one more reason why I will need the power of *your* pen! Our family will be relocating in South-East Asia this summer for at least two years. I feel blessed that FBPN's network in the U.S. is up and going. I feel even more so at the thought that what I had envisioned to be a globe-trotting, multilingual publication is realizing itself now rather than later.

Our newsletter has been available in English and Spanish beginning with the March/April 1996 issue. Because the opportunity beckons again, FBPN is set to go international! Isabelle Talpain-Long, our French-born member will act as the precious liaison between our U.S. and international networks. As I connect with new foreign-born families, I look forward to sharing our bilingual home formulas with them as I am sharing those with you on p. 3.

The foreign language learning models on p. 4 address some of our members' request. Our brief family vignette provides a glimpse of the foreign-born parent's language and culture dilemma as a source of strength (p. 5). Indeed, it illustrates our network's *raison d'être*. Finally, H. D. Brown's Breaking the Language Barrier (1991) represents an attempt to bridge child and adult foreign language learning strategies (p. 6).

Enjoy this issue and mail your thoughts to us.



Editor

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8 For young readers and parents

Our mission

We are an interactive peer resource, advocate and multilingual support network for foreign-born and *all* parents whose lives are touched by the interaction between the home- and host-country cultures. We engage parents in a dialogue on how that cultural interaction affects parental involvement in bilingual child-rearing, intercultural parenting, the workplace, school and community. All rights reserved worldwide.

Who we are

FBPN is an upbeat, multilingual publication based on its founder's experience as a spouse in an intercultural marriage and a foreign-born parent whose personal mission has been to preserve the home culture while thriving in the host-culture and maintaining a global outlook.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) is a bimonthly publication of BOND (Business, Organization and Network Development), a global human resources consulting and training business.

What we can do for you

We offer
- parenting workshops and seminars
- consulting in multicultural community and organization development, including global human resources and leadership development, work-family and diversity strategic planning
- workshops on marketing across cultures
- advertising space.

How to reach us

Alice T. Rasmussen, 2700 N. Wakefield Street
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Membership

In the U.S.:

$35.00	individuals and families
$50.00	public, government and state institutions, non-profit organizations
$65.00	commercial, international, for-profit institutions and universities

International:

$52.50	individuals, families
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Benefits include
- a yearly subscription to our newsletter (six issues)
- access to study abroad programs
- a 10% discount on multiple orders.

Back issues are available at $5.00 per issue

Payment

Please mail your check in US$ payable to *The Foreign-Born Parent Network* **with form on p. 8** to:

The Foreign-Born Parent Network
AMEMB Box B
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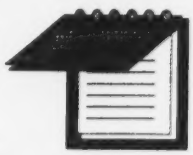
What's new?



- The D.C. Community Prevention Partnership, a current institutional subscriber is in the process of organizing a forum/conference to hear the voices of Asian youth who live in the District. Our editor joined the planning committee in May. The event is scheduled for August (date unknown at press time). For more information or to get involved, please contact Greg Chen, the Asian Pacific initiative coordinator at 202 898 4700.

- We have entered into a collaborative alliance with Promotion Marketing International which represents a number of foreign language immersion centers in France and Spain. Italian language immersion is next in PMI's plan. The family-friendly format at selected sites seems particularly attractive!

- One of our readers responded to Dawnn Burwell's article in a previous issue. Linda Olesen, a former coordinator with new parents at the American School Foundation in Guadalajara shared with Dawnn the benefits of orientation materials for new parents, teachers and students. The packet of information was produced by the American School of Mexico.

- A workshop/ seminar is being scheduled for World Bank families for 1996-1997 on intercultural parenting, bilingual child-rearing in the home.

- We are now recognized as a multilingual and educational resource in languages and linguistics by the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C. Tune in for details in upcoming issues.

Our comments in *Smart Kid* magazine, April 1996, p. 48

"Alice T. Rasmussen, who heads the Arlington, Va-based Foreign Born Parent Network cites a recent study showing that after 20 years in the U.S. only 19 percent of all immigrants still speak their native language- down from 50 percent after 10 years. Perhaps ironically, explains Rasmussen, this trend is particularly true among the affluent and educated immigrant populations. To the lesser educated and lesser advantaged there is often no alternative but to use the native-home language," says Rasmussen.

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How families cope

Home bilingual child-rearing: Let us count the ways.

In truth, there is not one formula but many, hence the confusion I sense among some parents. Furthermore, today's formula may need to be adjusted tomorrow as the child's reactions dictate in the course of cognitive and emotional development and as we, parents become comfortable in the process. This is to say that raising a bilingual child does not come with a cut and dry set of rules (although it does need to follow certain principles). What this also suggests is that the role of parent cum researcher can be very significant indeed. So let your paper and pen be the mindful companions in your bilingual family adventure!

Here is the latest and it comes to us from Australia. "Australia's language policy for the 1990s, *Australia's Language,* states clearly (Dawkins, 1991, p. 79): "International and Australian evidence suggests that, where possible, literacy should be established first in the child's first language." (NELL, Spring 1996, p. 25). Quite simply, I started my daughters on French from day one, well before they began English-speaking preschool. And I am glad I did. The formulas identified below are gathered from both my personal experience and that of other parents as well as extensive reading on the topic of bilingualism.

Whatever the formula, *you* can do it too!

" (As long as, you)...
- have a sense of purpose
- work hard
- set goals
- take risks
- fear failure, but don't give up
- know your priorities
- have the courage of your convictions
- (realize that) you can't do it alone."

From "The Key to Success" as reported in Washington Post, Parade, April 21, 1996

What formulas?

• In our intercultural family, French is spoken by the *primary* caregiver, i.e. me and English by their dad, *regardless* of what the mainstream language may be - or may have been. Our older daughter now aged 10 grew up first, in Burma then Thailand and at age 5, was able to hold a conversation in Thai with her part-time nanny. My husband and I communicate in English whether or not the girls are present. This 'one parent- one language' strategy (intercultural formula I) has worked best with the rule of consistency as suggested in earlier issues.

What follows are other parents's formulas:

• Both parents are native speakers of a *minority* language and not quite comfortable speaking the mainstream language (two parents-one minority language). The schooled child grows up speaking both and may well prefer the mainstream language over the other, for whatever reasons. I know parents who are in that situation and who have become especially concerned.

• In this monocultural marriage, both parents are bilingual in their native tongue and the mainstream language (two parents-two languages, version I). They may communicate with each other and with their child in both languages. Other parents elect to speak only one of the two languages, generally for fear of confusing the child.

• Both parents are native speakers of the *mainstream* language. One of them is proficient in the 'minority' language and always speaks to their child in that target language (two parents-two languages, version II). The child may or may not be schooled in the mainstrean language.

• Both parents are native of the mainstream culture and desire to expose their child to the 'minority' language with the cooperation of the nanny/baby-sitter, friends who may be native speakers or relatives who may be proficient in the 'minority' language (two parents-one second language through third person).

Finally, to close the loop,

• In this intercultural marriage, one parent joins the other in speaking the 'minority' language. Judging from my circle of friends and acquaintances, this 'two parents-one language' strategy (intercultural formula II) may be as common as the first one.

Which formula should it be for you?

Here keep in mind how you *both* feel about bilingual child-rearing as a goal and your child's particular response. But do consider

the following:

1/ which language is your 'emotional' language?
2/ who is the primary caregiver in your family? Or is parenting shared equally? The answer to this question identifies the frequency of exposure to the native language.
3/ the age of your child. Has he or she started school?
4/ his or her personality;
4/ which mainstream language is spoken outside the home *may* be *less* significant than the dominant language your child is schooled in in the early years.

Between the age of four and 11, I was schooled in a French-speaking school in a mainstream Lao culture. The home language was Vietnamese. I grew up conversant in all three languages, although French became dominant. Incidentally, research makes the distinction between balanced and dominant bilingual.

Thinking of bilingual abilities along these lines, here are two contextual associations you might want to keep in mind. The first association is between the target language and the parent who speaks it. The second association between the language and the home reinforces the first.

To illustrate, my children have always personalized the use of French with me. For the three of us, French remains our 'first nature' (although we also dabble in Spanish and Vietnamese). Since they started school, French has been associated with me *and* home and English with school. To maintain their 'code-switching' reflex along the home-school pattern, *I have been helping with homework exclusively in French.*

About the 'foreign language self'!

(In second language learning), the self that you have grown comfortable with is suddenly faced with an additional self: a foreign language self that thinks, feels and acts differently.

H. D. Brown in *Breaking the language Barrier*

As you work out your own bilingual child-rearing formula,

• make your native language *the* home language during the optimal years *well before* puberty (see our book review on p. 6)
• Expose your child to a second language *with* the first language rather than after. Learning related languages such as Spanish and French also makes sense (P. Kuhl, *Newsweek*, Feb. 19, 1996)
• Do plan how you will spend your money, time and other resources. From the day my daughters were born, my major investment has been in books and our 'French time' together. Money spent on toys was kept to a strict minimum (relatives filled in the gap)! TV has remained our silent witness.

In raising bilingual children, the most dedicated champion your children will ever have is *you*, the parent (foreign-born or not)!

What's available in schools?

About foreign language learning models

There exist a number of foreign language learning models available in public *elementary* schools. Following is a list which ranges from the least to the most time intensive. Each model also reflects different program goals and objectives.

• FLEX (Foreign Language Experience or Exploratory) is more or less a short-term orientation to cultures (up to one year) and perhaps the least effective in terms of developing linguistic skills. FLEX students have generally been excluded from the research on academic and cognitive benefits of early language learning. 41% of all elementary school programs in the U.S. are FLEX programs.

• FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) involves more classroom time (up to 90 minutes per week). Begins at any grade K through 6. FLES students can achieve different usable levels of language proficiency. The practice of integrating subject content with foreign language has been part of a trend in FLES programs. 45% of elementary school programs fall in this category.

• Immersion programs have been recognized as the most effective in terms of helping students acquire high levels of foreign language proficiency. Typically begin in kindergarten or 1st grade. Only 3% of U.S. programs offer that format although they are currently widespread in Canada where immersion originated.

Immersion students consistently score high on measures of reading, mathematics and science. These subjects are generally taught in a foreign language. In partial immersion, half of the day is taught in the target language. In total immersion, instruction is delivered in the foreign language. Language is thus a tool for learning and communicating rather than the focus of instruction.

Immersion programs are the most costly in terms of staffing. One teacher per class per grade is required. He/she must have native-like proficiency in speaking and writing in the foreign language. Teacher certification is also required since subject content is taught in the foreign language.

The list above may assist you in inquiring with your area's schools. It is also hoped that you will find it useful in planning and scheduling time and resources for 'immersing' your child in the home. General words of caution and further recommendations follow:

• 'informal immersion' works best with your youngster. Live the language in daily activities down the aisles of a supermarket, on the playground, in the kitchen, doing crafts or reading with your child.
• Do read about language development in early childhood.
• Keep a journal to monitor your child's reactions and progress as well as your own.
• Compare notes with other parents.
• Add variety to the family foreign language experience. Your child's vocabulary will expand as a result. And both of you will have more fun too!

Source:
Foreign Language: On Starting Early by Myriam Met, Educational Leadership, September 1991.

"... the integrity of the family, the last bastion of cultural preservation and transmission"

"One of the saddest laments I hear from first-generation immigrant parents is not the sacrifices they made to come here - leaving their families and culture and status behind. Over and over they say their biggest sacrifice is that they lose their children to the (mainstream) culture."

Quote by Ryerson Polytechnic University Professor Kenise Murphy Killbride, an early childhood education specialist and immigrant from New York City (*O Canada!... Whose Canada?*, Washington Post, May 5, 1996)

Our family vignette as captured at the event of March 17th.

"Belonging with a sense of purpose"

Deatema Abdul-Latif is an African American social worker with the Fairfax County Public School System and a free-lance journalist. She attended the intercultural event (which was reported in the May/June issue). Her article is submitted in part (because of space constraints) and with some modification (for the sake of accuracy). Deatema's article effectively captures the dilemma and strength of the foreign-born.

Both young and old gathered in celebration of cultural understanding in the midst of diversity. Over forty people were in attendance. Barbados-Canada, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Japan, Morocco, Russia and the U.S.A. were among the linguistic backgrounds represented. Atsuko Kuwana, from Japan, and her husband, Michael Winter who is of Armenian and Polish descent attended the function with their adopted son. Taka, age 4 1/2, is being reared in a dual language household (where English and Japanese are spoken).

"We adopted him at seven weeks old," said Kuwana. "He is fluent in Japanese and English and is well aware of which parent can speak which language," she added.

Both parents had concerns about their son losing his cultural identity. Taka was born in Japan and the Kuwana-Winter's weren't sure how to preserve his Japanese heritage in an American society. After consulting with other bicultural parents, they decided to communicate with him in his native language while promoting his use of English.

Recognizing this type of uncertainty as a common dilemma among the foreign-born has prompted educators and parents to merge interests in addressing the needs of children from "bi" and "multi-cultural" backgrounds (if they haven't done so yet, it is suggested they should).

Rasmussen developed the foreign-born parent network as a means of empowering immigrants. Operating with the premise that each human being holds intrinsic values coded by their unique cultural experiences, she suggests that it is absolutely necessary to maintain the original self. This foundation paves the way toward linking with other cultures.

While she advocates for children to keep their native language, Rasmussen recognizes the need to acquire the language skills of the mainstream culture.

The Sunday, March 17, 1996 event was an exciting beginning. On that day, it was clear that the parents who participated experienced a feeling of belonging and a sense of purpose.

Addendum::
At the close of the evening, Deatema shared with me that she felt very much welcomed at our intercultural gathering.

Book Review

Breaking the Language Barrier by H. Douglas Brown. Intercultural Press, Inc. 1991. With a Foreword by Senator Paul Simon. 184 pages.

When I finished my second reading of the book, it struck me that one subtitle might have been appropriate for it: Learn to speak a foreign language the way children do. To those foreign-born parents whose current endeavour is to become fluent in English, this book should prove very useful. To those for whom English fluency is already acquired, yet who desire to pass on the native language gift to their children, the book's analogy between how children and adults learn a *second* language should be equally helpful.

The book builds on the multilingual experiences of its author, as a child growing up in Zaire, schooled in Belgium and as an adult who has mastered or otherwise dabbled in about 18 different languages. FBPN's parents will be interested to know that Brown grew up "speaking English and Lontomba and subsequently learned Lingala, Kikongo, and Tshiluba." Against this stimulating language environment he knew as a youth, add about twenty years of teaching and research in second language acquisition and a stint as president of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages).

This record of achievement in language learning should dispel the notion that learning another language, even obscure ones as Brown did, harms the development of English language skills by native speakers. Brown clearly thrived on it. He further intimates that adult second language learners may go about it backwards! So then, what is there to learn from the way kids acquire a second language?

Although research shows that children learn a second language as easily as a first, no direct analogy should be drawn between child first language learning and adult second language learning, the author cautions. That is so because unlike adults, children go through the process of intellectual and linguistic development *at the same time* in first language acquisition. But a parallel can be drawn between child and adult second language learning. Brown's message to adult learners contains three important components: personal creative meaning, communicative urgency and social relationships. Forget about grammar initially! That is to say, learn like kids do!

Are adult language learners doing it all wrong?

Children focus on
- social relationships first,
- communication to convey feelings, wants, ideas and facts,
- grammatical correctness at a late stage.

Adapted from Breaking the Language Barrier, p. 36

What about making mistakes? Have no fear, the author suggests. An entire chapter about "making your mistakes work for you" boils down to this : Just as adult learners should not let mistakes inhibit them, parents should avoid correcting their child's speech *unless* it is relevant to meaning (and even so, they should do it indirectly). With children, "errors" correct themselves subconsciously in due time, Brown points out.

In both first and second language acquisition, comprehension is vital to production, he remarks. It is also dependent on the quality (rather than quantity) of input, as in "variety, depth and meaningfulness". In children, comprehension goes by rules that are *logical to the child*, and a lot of what the latter absorbs cannot be readily observed.

For adults, comprehension and production are best obtained by a combination of communication strategies (as suggested in chapter 9, Choosing Your Classroom Method). Gardner's theories of multiple intelligences expands our understanding of cognitive styles and language aptitude. The direct parallel between teaching and acting (p. 122) reminded me that in French immersion in our home, my kids and I frequently engage in acting and role-playing.

Chapter 4 through 6 (Using your brain power; Strategies for success; I'm OK-I can do it!) should be of particular help to teacher's aids and adult learners. By inference, parents of young children can also gain some valuable insights about how youngsters process language. Children have the ability to acquire two languages simultaneously or one *after* the other. But *before* puberty is the optimal period. Past that critical stage, second language learning tends to be intellectualized rather than uninhibited and natural and, the research shows, the acquisition of a native accent in the second language is less likely to occur. Altogether, for children and adults alike, the most successful recipe for language learning includes: exploration, manipulation, activity, stimulation, knowledge and ego enhancement (p. 87).

Brown's book avoids the jargon of research. It is also well organized. Readers will appreciate the recap at the end of each chapter, not to mention the cognitive self-tests (in the appendix) which could be taken *before* reading the book.

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Your success is *our* story!

Many of you watched reruns of the teleconference of March 6th on the topic of the Second Language Advantage. Your reactions echoed this parent's opinion :

"It was about time (schools paid attention)!"

Katarina Hamilton (Sweden)
AAFSW, Washington D.C.

The best endorsement I have heard yet:

"Will the newsletter come out every month?"

Giuliana Allen (Italy)
Washington D.C.

Following our March 17th event co-sponsored by EF Intercultural Foundation, Dawnn Burwell shared this report with us:

"The teachers were just elated! They said they will be able to buy much needed books for the seventy students or so in our school's magnet ESL program!"

"You are doing a wonderful job!"

The Children's Defense Fund,
Washington D.C.

Get help INSTANTLY!

- Through the foreign-born family interview, we address your questions **on the spot** and share our suggestions.
- Need practical pointers? Those are featured in the section below as tips for busy, working parents.

Share your tips with busy, working parents

Q: What tip worked best in getting your children to read French?

A: The answer is twofold. First of all, *how* you present things makes a huge difference. For example, to associate written words or letters with their sounds, I make letters speak too! Rather than saying this letter "*is pronounced* like this", I cue my kids with: It "*speaks* like this". In English, that same letter "*speaks* like that". In effect, I am telling my kids that letters too are bilingual, just like them! And they feel so very important! Even now, as both girls get more heavily into reading and writing, I still send out that cue. It works every time!

The second part of the answer is that it helps to raise readers! My children and I, we share a love of books. I remember us pouring over not just children's books, but also magazines such as the National Geographic, newspapers headlines, fliers. We deciphered road signs, beginning with the STOP sign. In short, nurturing a love of books means igniting at every turn, a love for the written word.

To be or not to be bilingual!

"The French asked Compuserve to ban all English-speaking Internet news groups from its customers in France."

From *Communications Week*, as reported in *Business Ethics* (March/April 1996)

A note for our readers

Until August 1st, 1996, telephone inquiries can be addressed to FBPN at tel: 703 812 8716. Please mail correspondence and payment directly to Alice T. Rasmussen/FBPN International at AMEMB Box B, APO AP, 96546 USA (e-mail:douglas.rasmussen@dos.us-state.gov). Watch the next issue for our U.S. liaison's address. Isabelle Talpain-Long can be contacted by mail, phone, fax or email.

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We are featured/quoted in

the summer issue of FLO Focus published by the State Department Family Liaison Office, a current institutional subscriber.

The word has spread to

California, Florida, Los Angeles, Louisiana, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina and Gravesano, Switzerland!

Our special thanks to

- Deaterna Abdul-Latif for her article
- Leslie Sawyer Bascom, editor of The Children's Post for surprising us with an update about FBPN's English and Spanish editions. We were profiled in The Children's Post issue of September 1995.
- parents who have been sending article clippings they know would be of interest to other parents.

For young readers and parents

Bravo Marco, by Pauline Priolo, Parnassus Press, Berkeley, CA, 1963

What's a cart without a donkey for little Marco! A wonderful *bilingual* book in English and Italian, replete with the flavor of an Italian village and filled with warmth and sunshine. Available in the Children's Room at Central Library, Arlington, VA.

Share your favorite titles (either in print or audio-visual form) with other parents. Your suggestion will be most appreciated by our Asian network overseas!

In our next issue

- Our foreign-born family
- Bilingual and biliterate: Help your child read in your native/second language too! (Part I)
- **Book review:** Bringing up Baby Bilingual by Jane Merrill, Facts on File, New York, 1984

Please specify choice of language edition, complete form and mail with your check payment. Thank you.

__ English __ Spanish

Name

Current mailing address:

Your children's names and age:

Home phone:
Work phone:
Fax:
E-mail:

Are you interested in

- **hosting opportunities?** ___ YES ___ NO
- **study abroad:** ___ YES ___ NO?
- **Which country(ies)?**

Language(s) spoken in the home:

How did you hear about FBPN?

To which friend can we mail a sample issue?

Please check items you would like us to contact you about.

__ your country's child-rearing/parenting practices
__ being our next foreign-born family feature
__ writing an article of interest to you and our readers
__ intercultural parenting strategies that work for you
__ your indicators of success
__ how your employer could help your ethnic community
__ practical considerations for classroom teachers
__ other?

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DE NACIMIENTO™
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Un foro multicultural e interactivo para
padres ciudadanos y compañeros en la educación

Une publicación multilingüe de BOND
Alice T. Rasmussen, fundadora y editora

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EDITOR

¡El poder de *su* pluma!

En el número anterior sugerí que un método efectivo para convertir nuestras dudas en un catalizador para tomar decisiones bien informadas es el poner nuestras observaciones, preguntas e indicadores de éxito por escrito. Al hacerlo, estamos en mejores condiciones de evaluar dónde nos encontramos ahora y dónde necesitamos estar luego. ¡Qué mejor manera para controlar el progreso de la familia!

A mismo tiempo, estamos contribuyendo con información para la investigación sobre la educación de los niños en forma bilingüe, la preservación del idioma nativo y la interacción entre la familia, la escuela y la comunidad. Pensándolo bien, incluso nuestros hijos de primer grado aprenden a llevar un diario en la escuela! Y por qué no? Usted puede estar escribiendo su propio éxito para la posteridad! Además, creo que el tomar notas lo tranquiliza a uno. Al llevar nuestros pensamientos al papel, tomamos control y podemos evitar, en forma efectiva, sentirnos desemparados.

Existe también otra razón por la que necesitaré el poder de *su* pluma! Nuestra familia se muda este verano al sureste de Asia por el término de, por lo menos, dos años. Me siento muy feliz que la red de FBPN en los Estados Unidos funciona y se incrementa, incluso me siento aún más feliz al pensar que lo que yo imaginé como una publicación multilingüe que recorriera el mundo se está produciendo ahora y no después.

Nuestro boletín se ha publicado en inglés y en español comenzando con el ejemplar de marzo/abril 1996. Ya que la oportunidad se presenta otra vez, FBPN se está preparando para ser internacional! Isabelle Talpain-Long, nuestra socia nacida en Francia, actuará como un apreciable enlace entre los Estados Unidos y la red internacional. A medida que me conecte con nuevas familias nacidas en el extranjero, espero poder compartir nuestras fórmulas de hogar bilingüe con ellas, así como las estoy compartiendo con ustedes en la pág. 3.

Los modelos de aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros en la pág. 4

EN ESTE NUMERO

2 • ¿A qué nos hemos dedicado?

3 Educación Bilingüe de Niños en el Hogar: ¡Contemos las formas!

4 Referente a Modelos de Educación de Idiomas Extranjeros

5 Nuestra "vignette" de familia por Deatama Abdul-Latif, periodista

6 **Revisión de Libro**: Rompiendo la Barrera del Lenguaje (Breaking the Language Barrier) por H. D. Brown (1991). Prefacio por el Senador Paul Simon.

7 Comparta sus sugerencias con los padres trabajadores muy ocupados

8 Para lectores jóvenes y padres

obedecen al pedido de algunos de nuestros socios. Nuestra breve "vignette" de familia refleja el dilema del lenguaje y cultura de los padres nacidos en el extranjero como fuente de fortaleza (pág. 5). Por cierto, ilustra *la razón de ser* de nuestra red. Finalmente, "Breaking the Language Barrier" (Rompiendo la Barrera del Idioma) de H. D. Brown (1991) representa un intento por unir las estrategias de aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros entre niños y adultos (pág. 6).

Disfrute de este ejemplar y envíenos sus ideas.

Editor

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Nuestra misión

Somos una red multilingüe de apoyo y defensa multicultural, interactiva y con recursos de nuestros pares dedicada a padres nacidos en el extranjero y a *todos* cuyas vidas están marcadas por la interacción entre la cultura del país de origen y aquella donde residen. Comprometemos a los padres para dialogar sobre cómo esta interacción cultural afecta el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma, el hecho de venir de diferentes culturas el cual marca el compromiso de los padres, el lugar de trabajo, la escuela y la comunidad. Derechos de autor de la Red de Padres Extranjeros de Nacimiento en cualquier forma, o en cualquier país o idioma que sea.

¿Quiénes somos?

FBPN es una publicación optimista multilingüe basada en la experiencia de su fundadora como esposa en un matrimonio intercultural y madre nacida en el extranjero cuya misión personal ha sido la preservación de la cultura nativa al mismo tiempo que prosperaba en la cultura del país de residencia, manteniendo una visión global.

FBPN (ISSN 1085-3596) es publicada cada dos meses por BOND "Business, Organization and Network Development" (Desarrollo de la Organización, Negocios y de la Red), un negocio de capacitación y consultoría en recursos humanos globales.

¿Qué podemos hacer por usted?

Ofrecemos
- seminarios y talleres para padres
- consultorías en desarrollo de organización y comunidad multicultural, incluyendo recursos humanos globales y desarrollo de liderazgo, familia y trabajo y planeamiento estratégico en diversidad
- talleres en técnicas de venta a través de diferentes culturas
- espacio para publicidad multicultural

¿Cómo puede contactarnos?

Teléfono /fax: 703 812-8716 (hasta el primero de Agosto 1996)

FBPN Internacional, AMEMB Box B, APO AP 96546

Cuota de socio

En los Estados Unidos:

$35,00	individual o familias
$50,00	instituciones públicos, estatales y de gobierno, organizaciones sin fines de lucro
$65,00	comercial, internacional, instituciones y universidades con fines de lucro

Internacional:

$52,50	individual o familias
$75.00	organizaciones sin fines de lucro, instituciones estatales y públicas
$92,50	comercial, internacional, instituciones con fines de lucro

Los beneficios incluyen:
- subscripción de un año (seis ejemplares)
- acceso a programas de estudio en el extranjero
- 10% de descuento en órdenes múltiples.

Las ediciones anteriores se encuentran disponibles a $5 cada una.

Favor enviar su cheque (pagadero en dólares a *The Foreign-born Parent Network*) **con el formulario de página 8 a AMEMB Box B, APO AP 96546.**

¿A qué nos hemos dedicado?

- La Sociedad para Prevención de la Comunidad de D.C. (D.C. Community Prevention Partnership), que es actualmente un suscriptor institucional, se encuentra en el proceso de organizar un foro/conferencia a fin de escuchar las voces de los jóvenes asiáticos que viven en el Distrito. Nuestro editor se unió al comité planificador en mayo. El evento está programado para agosto (aún no se conoce la fecha). Para más información o para formar parte del evento contacte, por favor, Greg Chen, coordinador de iniciativas del Pacífico Asiático al 202 898 4700.

- Hemos comenzado una alianza de colaboración con el "Promotion Marketing International" (Promoción de Mercadeo Internacional) que representa un número de centros de inmersión de idiomas extranjeros en Francia y en España. Su próximo proyecto es la inmersión en el idioma italiano. Pareciera particularmente atractivo el hecho de hacer disponible un formato para familias en los sitios elegidos!

- Uno de nuestros socios respondió al artículo de Dawnn Burwell de un número anterior. Linda Olesen, antigua coordinadora de nuevos padres en la "American School Foundation" (Fundación de la Escuela Americana) en Guadalajara compartió con Dawnn los beneficios de materiales de orientación para nuevos padres, maestros y estudiantes. El paquete de información fué producido por la "American School" (Escuela Americana) de México.

- Un taller esta programado para 1996-1997 por las familias del Banco Mundial sobre el aprendizaje del idioma natal en el hogar, el hecho de venir de diferentes culturas para padres e hijos.

- El Centro de Linguística Aplicada de Washington D.C. (Center for Applied Linguistics) reconoce la publicación de FBPN como recurso multilingüe y educacional sobre Idiomas y Linguística. Más detalles en próximos números.

Nuestros comentarios en la revista "Smart Kid" (Niño Astuto), abril 1996, pág. 48

"Alice T. Rasmussen, quien preside la Red de Padres Nacidos en el Extranjero con base en Arlington, VA, cita un estudio reciente que muestra que después de 20 años en los Estados Unidos sólo un 19 por ciento de todos los inmigrantes hablan su idioma natal, porcentaje que baja del 50 por ciento después de los 10 años. Es posible, ironicamente, explica Rasmussen, que esta tendencia es más cierta en las poblaciones inmigrantes afluentes y con más educación. Quienes tienen menos educación y menos ventajas, generalmente no tienen otra alternativa que utilizar el idioma natal", dice Rasmussen.

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Como las familias salen adelante

Educación Bilingüe de Niños en el Hogar: Contemos las Formas!

En verdad, no existe sólo una fórmula sino muchas, de ahí la confusión de los padres. Más aún, la fórmula actual puede necesitar ajustarse en el día de mañana a medida que las reacciones del niño así lo indiquen en su desarrollo cognitivo y emocional y a medida que nosotros, padres, nos sintamos cómodos en el proceso. Es decir que educar un niño bilingüe no significa tener un conjunto de reglas rígidas (aunque sí necesita seguir ciertos principios). Lo que esto también sugiere es que el rol de padres investigadores puede ser muy significativo, en verdad. Así que deje que papel y pluma sean sus compañeros en la aventura de la familia bilingüe!

Esto es lo último y nos viene de Australia. "La política sobre idiomas de Australia para la década del 90, "*Australia's Language*" (Idioma de Australia) define claramente (Dawkins, 1991, pág. 79). 'Evidencia internacional y de Australia sugiere que, cuando sea posible, la alfabetización debería establecerse primero en el idioma primero del niño'. (NELL, Primavera 1996). Simplemente, mis hijas aprendieron francés desde el primer día, mucho antes de comenzar la escuela pre-escolar en inglés. Y me siento muy feliz de haberlo hecho. Las fórmulas que se indican más abajo son extraídas de mi experiencia personal así como de la de otros padres y de extensas lecturas sobre el tema del bilingualismo.

Cualquiera sea la fórmula, usted también puede hacerlo!

"(Siempre y cuando usted)...
- tenga una idea de propósito
- trabaje duro
- establezca objetivos
- tome riesgos
- tema el fracaso, pero no renuncia
- conoce sus prioridades
- tiene la valentía de sus convicciones
- (entiende que) no puede hacerlo solo."

De "The Key to Success" (La Llave del Exito) según se informa en el *Washington Post*, Parade, 21 de abril de 1996

¿Qué fórmulas?

- En nuestra familia intercultural, quien provee la atención *primaria* habla francés, es decir yo misma, y su padre les habla en inglés, *sin importar* el idioma que se hable, o se haya hablado, de la corriente principal. Nuestra hija mayor, ahora de 10 años de edad, creció primero en Burma y luego en Tailandia y cuando tenía 5 años podía conversar enThai con su niñera de medio tiempo. Mi esposo y yo nos comunicamos en inglés, ya sea que las niñas estén or no presentes. Esta estrategia de "un padre-un idioma" (fórmula intercultural I) ha funcionado mejor siguiendo la regla de ser consistente, según se sugiriera en números anteriores.

A continuación figuran las fórmulas de otros padres:

- Ambos padres hablan un idioma natal *minoritario* y no se encuentran cómodos hablando el idioma de la corriente principal (dos padres-un idioma minoritario). El niño en edad escolar crece hablando ambos idiomas y puede muy bien preferir el idioma de la corriente principal, por la razón que sea. Conozco padres en esa situación que se encuentran especialmente preocupados.

- En este matrimonio monocultural, ambos padres son bilingües en su idioma natal y el idioma de la corriente principal (dos padres-dos idiomas, versión I). Se comunican con los niños y entre ellos en ambos idiomas. Otros padres eligen hablar sólo uno de los dos idiomas, generalmente por miedo de confundir al niño.

- Ambos padres hablan originalmente el idioma de la corriente principal. Uno de ellos es versado en el idioma "minoritario" y siempre habla al niño en ese idioma-objeto (dos padres-dos idiomas, versión II). El niño puede o no ir a la escuela del idioma de la corriente principal.

- Ambos padres son nativos de la cultura de la corriente principal y desean exponer al niño al idioma "minoritario", con la cooperación de la niñera, amigos que pueden tener ese idioma nativo o familiares que pueden ser versados en el idioma "minoritario" (dos padres-un idioma secundario or intermedio de una tercera persona).

Finalmente, para cerrar el círculo,
- en este matrimonio intercultural, un padre se une al otro para hablar el idioma "minoratorio". A juzgar por my círculo de amigos y conocidos, esta estrategia (dos padres-un idioma II) puede ser tan común como la primera.

¿Cuál es la fórmula adecuada para usted?

Aquí hay que tener en cuenta cómo se sienten *ambos* padres acerca de educar los niños en forma bilingüe, como objetivo, y de acuerdo con la respuesta particular del niño. Pero considere lo siguiente:

1/ ¿Cuál es su idioma "emocional"?
2/ ¿Quién provee el cuidado primario en su familia? O la función de padre se comparte por igual? La respuesta a esta pregunta identifica la frecuencia de exposición al idioma nativo.
3/ La edad de su niño. ¿Ha comenzado a ir a la escuela?
4/ Su personalidad.
5/ El idioma que se hable en la corriente principal *puede* ser *menos* importante que el idioma dominante que el niño ha recibido en la escuela los primeros años.

Entre la edad de cuatro y 11 años, yo fuí a una escuela de habla francesa en una cultura donde la corriente principal era Lao. El idioma en el hogar era vietnamés y crecí hablando los tres idiomas, aunque el francés se convirtió en dominante. Incidentalmente, la investigación distingue entre bilingüe dominante y equilibrado.

Siguiendo este pensamiento sobre habilidades bilingües, hay dos asociaciones contextuales que usted puede tener en cuenta. La primera es la que une el idioma deseado y el padre que lo habla. La segunda asociación es entre el idioma y el hogar que refuerza al primero.

A fin de ilustrar esta idea, mis hijas siempre han asociado el francés con mi persona. Para nosotras tres el francés es la "naturaleza primera" (a pesar que también usamos el español y el vietnamés). Desde que comenzaron la escuela el francés ha estado asociado con mi persona *y* con el hogar y el inglés con la escuela. Para mantener su reflejo de "cambio de código" ligado al modelo hogar-escuela, *he estado ayudando con sus deberes exclusivamente en francés.*

Mientras usted aplica su propia fórmula para educar su hijo en forma bilingüe,

- haga de su idioma nativo *el* idioma del hogar durante los años óptimos *mucho antes* de la pubertad (véase nuestra revisión de libro en la pág. 6).
- Exponga a su niño a un segundo idioma *con* el primero, en vez de después. El aprender idiomas relacionados como el español y el francés también hace sentido (P. Kuhl, *Newsweek*, 19 febrero 1996).
- Planifique cómo gastará su dinero, tiempo y otros recursos. Desde que nacieron mis hijas mi mayor inversión ha sido en libros y en nuestro "tiempo francés" que pasamos juntas. El dinero para juguetes se mantuvo en un mínimo (los parientes llenaron este vacío)! Y la TV se mantuvo como testigo silencioso.

Al educar niños bilingües, el campeón más dedicado que tendrá su niño es *usted*, padre (nacido en el extranjero o no)!

Acerca del "yo de idioma extranjero"!

"(En el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma), el yo con el cual usted se sentía cómodo subitamente se enfrenta con un yo adicional: un yo de idioma extranjero que piensa, siente y actúa en forma diferente."

H. D. Brown en Breaking The Language Barrier (Rompiendo la Barrera del Idioma).

¿Qué hay disponible en las escuelas?

Referente a modelos de educación de idiomas extranjeros

Existe un número de modelos de educación de idiomas extranjeros que están disponibles en escuelas *primarias*. A continuación se menciona una lista que va de la menos intensa en tiempo a la que utiliza más tiempo. Cada modelo refleja, asimismo, diferentes metas y objetivos de programa.

- FLEX "Foreign Language Experience or Exploratory" (Experiencia o Exploración de Lenguajes Extranjeros) es más o menos una orientación a corto plazo de culturas (hasta un año) y, quizás, la menos efectiva en términos de desarrollo de habilidades linguísticas. Los estudiantes de FLEX se han visto generalmente excluidos de la investigación sobre beneficios académicos y cognitivos del aprendizaje temprano. El 41% de todos los programas escolares primarios en los Estados Unidos son programas FLEX.

- FLES "Foreign Language in the Elementary School" (Lenguaje Extranjero en la Escuela Primaria) toma más tiempo de clase (hasta 60 minutos por semana). Comienza en cualquier grado K hasta 6. Los estudiantes de FLES pueden adquirir diferentes niveles de capacidad del lenguaje que pueden usar. La práctica de integrar el contenido del tema con el lenguaje extranjero ha formado parte de la tendencia en los programas de FLES. El 45% de los programas escolares primarios entran en esta categoría.

- Los programas de inmersión han sido reconocidos como los más efectivos en términos de ayuda a los estudiantes para que adquieran altos niveles de capacidad de idiomas extranjeros. Comienzan típicamente en kindergarten o en primer grado. Sólo el 3% de los programas en los Estados Unidos ofrecen este formato, a pesar de que están muy difundidos en Canadá, donde se originó la inmersión.

de la página 6...

En el caso de los adultos, se obtienen mejor la comprensión y la producción combinando estrategias de comunicación (según se sugiere en el capítulo 9, Eligiendo su Método de Clase). Las teorías de Gardner de inteligencias múltiples expanden nuestro entendimiento de estilos de conocimiento y aptitudes del lenguaje. El paralelo directo entre enseñanza y actuación (pág. 22) me recuerda que mis hijas y yo frecuentemente actuamos y asumimos roles en nuestra clase de inmersión en francés en nuestro hogar.

Los capítulos 4 al 6 (Usando el Poder de su Cerebro; Estrategias para el Exito; Yo estoy O.K - Puedo Hacerlo!) son de particular utilidad como ayuda para maestros y adultos que están aprendiendo. Por inferencia, los padres de niños pequeños pueden obtener invaluables conocimientos de cómo los niños procesan el lenguaje. Los niños tienen la habilidad para adquirir dos idiomas simultáneamente o uno *después* del otro. Pero el periodo óptimo es *antes* de la pubertad. Pasando esa etapa crítica, el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma tiende a intelectualizarse en vez de ser más natural e sin inhibiciones, y la investigación muestra que es más difícil la adquisicición del acento nativo en el segundo idioma. Teniendo todo esto en cuenta, tanto para niños como para adultos, la receta más exitosa para aprender idiomas incluye: exploración, actividades de manipulación, estímulo, conocimiento y el realce del ego (pág. 87).

El libro de Brown evita la jerga de la investigación. Es asimismo bien organizado. Los lectores apreciarán la recapitulación al final de cada capítulo, sin mencionar los exámenes de conocimiento para tomarlos uno mismo (en el apéndice), que pueden tomarse también *antes* de leer el libro.

Ser o no bilingüe!

"Los franceses solicitaron a Compuserve prohibir en internet todo grupo noticiero de habla inglesa para sus clientes en Francia."

De *Communications Week* (Semana de Comunicaciones), como se informara en *Business Ethics* (Etica de Negocios), marzo/abril 1996.

Los estudiantes de programas de inmersión alcanzan en forma consistente altas clasificaciones en lectura, matemáticas y ciencias. Estos temas se enseñan generalmente en idioma extranjero. En inmersión parcial, se enseña medio día en el lenguaje "visado". En inmersión total, el total de la instrucción se enseña en idioma extranjero. De esta manera el idioma es una herramienta para aprender y comunicarse, en vez de focalizar sólo la instrucción.

Los programas de inmersión son los más costosos en términos de personal. Se requiere un maestro por clase por grado. El or ella debe poseer capacidad como si fuera su lengua natal para hablar y escribir en el idioma extranjero. También se requiere una certificación como maestro, ya que el contenido del tema se enseña en el idioma extranjero.

La lista anterior puede ayudarle cuando averigue en las escuelas de su área. También se espera que le sea útil para planificar y programar su tiempo y recursos para "sumergir" su niño en el hogar. A continuación se indican algunas palabras generales de precaución y más recomendaciones:

- "Inmersión informal" funciona mejor con los más jóvenes. Viva el idioma en las actividades diarias en los pasillos del supermercado, en el campo de juego, en la cocina, haciendo trabajos manuales o leyendo con su niño.
- Lea sobre el desarrollo del lenguaje en niños en edad temprana.
- Lleve un diario para controlar las reacciones y progreso de su niño, así como las de usted.
- Compare sus notas con las de otros padres.
- Agregue variedad a la experiencia familiar del idioma extranjero. El vocabulario de su niño aumentará como resultado. Y ambos se divertirán más también!

Fuente:

Foreign language: On Starting Early (Idioma Extranjero: ComenzandoTemprano) por Myriam Met, Liderazgo Educacional, Septiembre de 1991.

"... La integridad de la familia, el último bastión para la preservación y transmisión de la cultura"

"Uno de los lamentos más tristes que escucho de los padres inmigrantes de la primera generación no es acerca de los sacrificios que han hecho para venir aquí - dejando atrás sus familias y culturas y estado. Ellos dicen y vuelven a decir que el mayor sacrificio es el perder sus hijos a la cultura (de la corriente principal)."

Cita del Profesor de la Universidad Ryerson Polytechnic, Kenise Murphy Killonde, especialista en educación de niños chicos e inmigrantes de la ciudad de Nueva York ("O Canada!... Whose Canada?", *Washington Post*, 5 de mayo de 1996

Nuestra "vignette" de familia, como pudo verse en el evento del 17 de marzo

"Perteneciendo con un sentido de propósito"

por Deatama Abdul-Latif

Deatama es una trabajadora social afroamericana con el Sistema de Escuelas Públicas del Condado de Fairfax y periodista "free lance". Ella asistió al evento intercultural (cuya información se publicó en el ejemplar de mayo junio). Se presenta sólo una parte de su artículo (debido a falta de espacio) y con algunas modificaciones (para hacerlo más exacto). El artículo de Deatema captura en forma efectiva el dilema y la fuerza de la persona nacida en el extranjero.

Tanto jóvenes como adultos se reunieron para celebrar la comprensión cultural en la diversidad. Asistieron más de 40 personas. Estuvieron representados como antecedentes linguísticos Barbados/Canadá, Costa Rica, Francia, Alemania, Japón, Moroco, Rusia y Estados Unidos. Estaban presentes Atsuko Kuwana, del Japón, y su esposo, Michael winter que tiene ascendientes armenios y polacos, y su hijo Taka, de cuatro y medio años, quien es educado en un hogar donde se hablan dos idiomas (inglés y japonés).

"Lo adoptamos cuando tenía siete semanas" dijo Kuwana. "El habla japonés e inglés muy bien y sabe muy bien qué padre habla qué idioma", agregó.

Ambos padres están preocupados por el hecho que su hijo puede perder su identidad cultural. Taka nació en Japón y los Kuwana/Winter no estaban seguros de que manera preservar la herencia japonesa en una sociedad americana. Luego de consultar con otros padres biculturales, decidieron comunicarse con él en su lengua natal y al mismo tiempo apoyando el uso del inglés.

Tanto educadores como padres, reconociendo este tipo de inseguridades como un común dilema de personas nacidas en el extranjero, procuran unir

intereses teniendo en cuenta las necesidades de los niños con antecedentes "bi" y "multiculturales". (Si aún no lo hicieron, se sugiere que deberían hacerlo).

Rasmussen ha desarrollado la red de padres nacidos en el extranjero como un medio de otorgar poder a los inmigrantes. Basándose en la idea que cada persona tiene valores intrínsicos codificados por sus experiencias culturales únicas, ella sugiere que es absolutamente necesario conservar el yo original. Este fundamento facilita el camino para unirse con otras culturas.

Al mismo tiempo que sostiene que los niños deben conservar su idioma natal, Rasmussen reconoce la necesidad de adquirir conocimientos del idioma de la cultura de la corriente principal.

El evento del domingo 17 de marzo fue un comienzo entusiasta. Quedo claro, ese día, que los padres que participaron experimentaron un sentimiento de pertenencia y un sentido de propósito.

Addendum:

Al final de la tarde, Deatema me comentó que sintió que era bienvenida en nuestra reunión intercultural.

Revisión de Libro

Breaking the Language Barrier (Rompiendo la Barrera del Lenguaje) por H. Douglas Brown, Intercultural Press, Inc., 1991. Prefacio por el Senador Paul Simor, 184 páginas.

Después de leer este libro por la segunda vez, se me ocurrió que un subtítulo sería apropriado para el mismo: Aprenda hablar un idioma extranjero lo mismo que lo hace un niño. Este libro puede ser muy útil para aquellos padres nacidos en el extranjero que tratan de dominar el inglés. Para aquellos que ya lo dominan, y que quieren pasar el regalo del idioma natal a sus niños, la analogía del libro entre la forma que niños y adultos aprenden un *segundo* idioma deber ser igualmente útil.

Los adultos que aprenden idiomas, lo están haciendo todo mal?

Los niños enfocan
- primero en las relaciones sociales,
- en la comunicación para expresar sentimientos, deseos, ideas y hechos,
- en la corrección gramatical como última etapa.

Adaptado de Breaking the Language Barrier (Rompiendo la Barrera del Idioma), pág. 36.

El libro construye a partir de las experiencias multilingües de su autor, quien creció en Zaire, fue a la escuela en Bélgica y, al ser adulto, ha dominado o ha incursionado en 18 idiomas diferentes. A los padres de FBPN les interesará saber que Brown creció "hablando inglés y Lontomba y posteriormente aprendió Lingala, Kikongo y Tshiluba". A este medio linguístico estimulante de su juventud, hay que agregar cerca de veinte años de enseñanza e investigación en la adquisición de un segundo idioma y un turno como presidente de TESOL, "Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages" (Maestros de Inglés para Quienes Hablan Otros Idiomas).

Estos logros en el aprendizaje de idiomas debe rechazar la noción que el aprender otro idioma, incluso algunos oscuros como lo hizo Brown, daña el desarrollo de las habilidades en inglés, por personas de habla nativa. Es claro que Brown prosperó en esta forma. Brown incluso sugiere que los adultos que aprenden un segundo idioma puede que lo estén haciendo al revés! Entonces, qué puede aprenderse de la manera como los niños aprenden un segundo idioma?

A pesar que la investigación muestra que los niños aprenden un segundo idioma tan facilmente como el primero, no debe uno asumir que hay una analogía directa entre la forma en que lo niños aprenden el primer idioma y la de los adultos que aprenden un segundo idioma, advierte el autor. Esto se produce porque los niños, al contrario de los adultos, viven el proceso de desarrollo intelectual y linguístico *al mismo tiempo* cuando adquieren su primer idioma. Pero se puede trazar un paralelo entre el aprendizaje de un segundo idioma de un niño y de un adulto. El mensaje de Brown a los adultos tiene tres importantes componentes: sentido personal creativo, urgencia comunicativa y relaciones sociales. Olvídese de la gramática inicialmente! Es decir, aprenda como lo hace un niño!

Qué pasa cuando se hacen errores? No tema, sugiere el autor. Un capítulo entero, dedicado a "utilizar sus errores en su beneficio", se refiere a lo siguiente: Así como los adultos que están aprendiendo no deben permitir que los errores los inhiban, los padres deben evitar corregir a sus niños, *a menos* que estén relacionados al significado (e incluso en ese caso deben hacer la correción en forma indirecta). Los "errores" en los niños se corrigen solos subconcientemente a su debido tiempo, dice Brown.

En la adquisición tanto del primero como de un segundo idioma, la comprensión es vital para la producción, dice. También depende de la calidad (más que de la cantidad) de lo que se adquiere, como en "la variedad, la profundidad y el significado". En los niños la comprensión sigue reglas que son *lógicas para el niño*, y mucho de lo que éste absorbe no puede observarse facilmente.

continuación en la pág. 9...

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Su éxito es nuestra historia!

Muchos de ustedes vieron el "rerun" de la teleconferencia del 6 de marzo sobre la Ventaja de un Segundo Idioma. Sus reacciones son eco de la opinión de esta madre:

"Era ya tiempo (escuelas presten atención)!"

Katarina Hamilton (Suecia),

Y a continuación el mejor respaldo que he eschuchado:

"Este boletín va a salir todos los meses?"

Giuliana Allen (Italia)

Siguiendo nuestro evento del 17 de marzo que ha sido co-patrocinado por EF Fundación Intercultural, Dawnn Burwell compartió con nosotros este informe:

"Las maestras estaban dichosas! Dijeron que iba a poder comprar libros que hacían mucha falta para los aproximadamente setenta estudiantes en el programa de nuestra escuela ESL!"

"Usted está haciendo un trabajo magnífico!"

The Children's Defense Fund (El Fondo de Defensa de los Niños), Washington D.C.

Recordatorio para nuestros lectores

Las preguntas por teléfono se pueden dirigir a Alice T. Rasmussen al 703 812 8716 hasta el primero de agosto de 1996. Favor dirigir la correspondencia y cheque directamente a: Alice T. Rasmussen/FBPN Internacional: AMEMB BOX B, APO AP 96546 (USA) - E-mail:douglas.rasmussen@dos.us-state.gov. Favor de averiguar la dirección y los números de teléfono, fax y correo electrónico de Isabelle Talpain-Long, quien es la liaison entre FBPN/EE.UU. y FBPN/Internacional.

¡Obtenga ayuda inmediata!

• Por intermedio de la entrevista para la familia nacida en el extranjero, nos abocamos a sus preguntas en el momento y compartimos nuestras sugerencias.
• Necesita consejos prácticos? Figuran en la sección que sigue como "Sugerencias para padres ocupados que trabajan".

Comparta sus sugerencias con los padres ocupados que trabajan

Pregunta: Qué funcionaría mejor para lograr que sus niños lean en francés?

Respuesta: La respuesta es doble. Primeramente, *como* presente las cosas hace une enorme diferencia. Por ejemplo, el asociar palabras escritas o letras con sus sonidos, hago que las letras hablen también! En vez de decir esta letra "*se pronuncia* así", les doy pié a mis hijas diciendo: "*habla* así". En inglés esa misma letra "*habla* como esto". En efecto, les estoy diciendo a mis hijas que las letras también son bilingües! Como ellas! Y eso las hace sentir tan importantes! Incluso ahora, que ambas niñas están más "metidas" en la lectura y escritura, todavía envío ese mensaje. Funciona todas las veces!

La segunda parte de la respuesta es que ayuda a criar lectores! Mis hijas, así como yo, compartimos al amor por los libros. Recuerdo cómo nos devorábamos no sólo libros para niños sino revistas como el "National Georgraphic", títulos de periódicos, folletos. Decifrábamos las señales de los caminos, comenzando por la señal de PARAR. En resumen, el nutrir el amor por los libros significa hacer nacer, a cada momento, el amor por la palabra escrita.

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Hemos sido mencionado en

el numéro de verano de FLO Focus que publica el "State Department Family Liaison Office" (Oficina de Liaison de la Familia del Departamento de Estado), un suscriptor institucional.

Se ha diseminado la noticia a

California, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina y Gravesano, Switzerland!

Nuestro especial agradecimiento a

- Daetema Abdul-Latif por su artículo
- Leslie Saywer Bascom, editor del The Children's Post por sorprendernos con su puesta al día sobre las ediciones de FBPN en inglés y en español. The Children's Post publicó un artículo sobre nosotros en septiembre 1995.
- a los padres que han estado enviando recortes de artículos que sabían eran de interés para otros padres.

Para lectores jóvenes y padres

Bravo Marco, por Pauline Priolo, Parnassus Press, Berkeley, CA, 1963.

Qué es un carro sin un burro para el pegueño Marco! Un hermoso libro bilingüe en inglés y en italiano, completo con el sabor de un pueblo italiano y lleno de calidez y sol. Se encuentra disponible en la Sala para Niños en la Biblioteca Central de Arlington, VA.

Comparta sus títulos favoritos (ya sea impresos o en forma de video cassetes) con otros padres. Sus sugerencias serán muy apreciadas por nuestra red en la Asia.

En nuestro próximo número

- La familia de FBPN
- Bilinguismo y alfabetización: Ayude a su niño a leer también en su idioma nativo/segundo idioma! (1a parte)
- **Revisión de Libro:** Bringing Up Baby Bilingual (Criando un Bebé Bilingüe) por Jane Merrill, Datos en Archivo, New York, 1984.

Favor de elegir su lenguaje de preferencia y enviar este formulario completado junto a su cheque. Muchas gracias.

___ inglés ___ español

Su nombre:

Dirección actual:

Nombres y edades de sus niños:

Teléfono en la casa:
Teléfono en la oficina:
Fax:
E-mail:

Está usted interesado en:

- oportunidades de ser anfitrión? ___ YES ___ NO
- estudiar en el extranjero: ___ YES ___ NO
- qué país(es)?

Idioma que se habla en el hogar?

Cómo se enteró sobre FBPN?
___ conferencia sobre idiomas extranjeros/PMI
___ amigos
___ otros

A qué amigo podemos enviar una copia de muestra de FBPN?

Favor de indicar los rubros que usted desearía que nos contactáramos con usted:

___ las prácticas utilizadas en su país para educar niños
___ nuestra familia en la próxima edición
___ escribir un artículo de interés para usted y nuestros lectores
___ estrategias para ser padres que funcionan para usted
___ sus indicadores de éxito
___ cómo su empleador puede ayudar su comunidad étnica
___ consideraciones prácticas para los maestros
___ otros?

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